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Autobiography of a
missionary.

THE
AUTOBIOGRAPHY
OF
A MISSIONARY.

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VOL. I.

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OF
A MISSIONARY.

BY
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“A TWO YEARS’ RESIDENCE AT NINEVEH.”

IN TWO VOLUMES.
VOL. I.

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AUTOBIOGRAPHY
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A MISSIONARY.

CHAPTER I.

THE retrospective view of an individual life cannot excite in a thoughtful and pious mind, any but the most grave and serious reflections. The remembrance of past days brings with it the revival of early associations and the recollection of early friends, but it recalls also the existence of many hopes which have since proved delusive, of many expect-

tations which have ended in disappointment. The fancies of childhood and the dreams of youth have perhaps been dispelled by the experience of maturer years, and the visions which the imagination once loved to picture and to cherish, we may but too often have found upon trial void of a substantial foundation. The sense of progress and improvement which renders the present delightful, only serves to bring out in stronger relief the follies or mistakes of the past, and the reflection that we have vanquished the temptations and defects of earlier years, is mingled with regret that so much time has been consumed in the contest, and that, after all our exertions, there still remains so much to lament and subdue.

Impressed by these feelings, yet animated by a strong sense of the goodness of that Almighty Being who has guided me in safety through so many of the hardships and perils

of life, I venture to lay these humble memoirs before the public eye, trusting that they may amuse some, benefit others, and be kindly received by all.

My father was one of the leading tradesmen in the town of Denton, situated near a cathedral city in one of the western counties of England. He was well to do in this world, and had twice discharged the office of churchwarden to the great satisfaction of the rector and the parishioners. We inhabited an old house in the High Street, that formerly belonged to the village surgeon, who had, some years before my birth, migrated to the suburbs, because he considered them the genteel part of the town. Our habitation was just opposite the Dissenting Chapel, a circumstance not very satisfactory to my father, who was much attached to the Church, and used to say frequently that he would never have any

dealings even in trade, with those whom he considered her enemies.

He was, indeed, in every respect one of a school that is becoming less numerous every day. There were two things on which he prided himself, his staunch Protestantism and his hatred of Dissent, while he not unfrequently boasted that for twenty years he had invariably proposed the toast of the Church at all the parish dinners that had occurred during that period. He was not very clearly informed in respect to the doctrines of his favourite institution, but one of the first books which he put into my hands was Nelson's "Fasts and Festivals," a work which I read with great pleasure, and almost learned by heart. We had an old map hanging up in my father's room, and it was my special delight to trace out upon it the journeys of the apostles, and particularly those of St. Paul, who, I heard

the curate, Mr. Templeton say, was supposed to have come even as far as Britain to preach the gospel to our pagan forefathers.

At the age of eight I went to the Grammar School, in spite of much opposition on the part of my mother, who wished very much to persuade her husband that so much book learning was not necessary for one who had to earn his bread by the labour of his hands. But the curate told him that a good education was never thrown away, and that no lad could be a worse Christian for being able to read the New Testament in the original tongue.

Our school-house was an old Gothic building that had formerly been the chapel of a monastery, suppressed and half destroyed at the Reformation, and our master, who was a fellow of one of the small colleges at Oxford, used to point out with no little pride the remains of a figure of St. Paul

in stained glass, which had escaped the hands of the Puritans during the spoliations and desecrations of the Great Rebellion. I must acknowledge that my eyes were often fixed on this figure during school hours, and I often thought more of the wanderings and labours of the great Apostle than of the classic page which lay before me.

Our master was very severe, following in his practice rather the traditions of a former age than the lenient methods of this; but nevertheless I acquired under him a good knowledge of the Latin and Greek languages, and particularly of the New Testament dialect. One of my first prizes was for my acquaintance with the journeys of St. Paul as set forth in the Acts of the Apostles, which indeed I preferred to almost any other portion of Holy Scripture.

When I was about sixteen, Archdeacon

Beere became our rector, being at the same time vicar of Bremsley, perpetual curate of Long-Heath, and a canon of the Cathedral. He was not much liked at Denton, for the people thought him a proud man ; but he seldom resided among them, leaving the greater part of the duty to Mr. Templeton, who received in return for his labours a salary equal in amount to about the twentieth part of the value of the living.

This venerable man, resembled him who has been described by Goldsmith, as

“ Passing rich with forty pounds a year.”

Half a century of hard toil in his Master's service had enfeebled his frame and silvered his locks, but neither age nor misfortune could subdue his energy, or chill his affection for his flock. The former rector, who esteemed him very much, had often wished

to procure him pupils, but this Mr. Templeton would never listen to, saying that his time was entirely devoted to one object, and that he should esteem it almost a sacrilege to alienate even an hour of it, adding, cheerfully, that he was but a single man with very few wants. It had not, however, always been so. In his youth he had married a lady who was his equal in piety and poverty, but she and her two children had long since fallen asleep in the Lord, and one stone in Denton church-yard marked out the place where they slumbered. Once, and only once, I saw a tear on the cheek of the survivor ; it was when he paused for a few minutes before this memorial of buried love. But he soon recovered himself, and spoke calmly and even cheerfully of his expectation, that he should soon be laid beside them, and meet his loved ones once again in a land where re-united friends

should never sever, and partings could never come.

Mr. Templeton resided in a small farmhouse on the outskirts of the town. The respect and veneration of the inmates for his character and office, induced them to be satisfied with a merely nominal rent for the humble apartment which he occupied. Here he kept his few books and some simple medicines, in which the poorer people had more faith than in the prescriptions of Dr. Hoppington, who boasted that he held a diploma, granted by one of the most famous German universities. There were many, indeed, who said that Mr. Templeton had studied physic in his youth and knew more about it than the doctor; but this saying the good man always discouraged, affirming that "every person ought to be trusted in his own profession, and that if he ventured to help his poorer neighbours in their ailments,

it was because they had no money to pay the doctor's fee."

Soon after I left school, my father died. Mr. Templeton attended him during his last moments with great assiduity, and came frequently after the funeral to visit my mother in her affliction. What passed between him and my father we never knew ; only a short time before he departed, the latter expressed his sorrow that he had so often spoken harshly of his Dissenting neighbours, and sending for Mr. Brown, the minister of the chapel, he implored his forgiveness of the many hard things he had said of him. Mr. Brown, I remember, was much affected, and told us as he passed through the shop, that if there was a ministering angel upon earth, it was Mr. Templeton.

The loss of my father was the first sorrow I had known, and for some weeks I felt

it grievously, but it was months before my poor mother became resigned. "No one," she said, "but herself could understand her loss," and I well remember how she clasped me round the neck and wept convulsively, when months afterwards a neighbour happened to say "that I closely resembled my poor father." She planted a few flowers at the foot of his grave; they are growing there still, and the last time I visited it I plucked one as a memorial, which has never left me in all my wanderings.

Among the many friends whose kind attentions were offered to my mother during our trouble, were two who seem worthy of a special notice. The first of these was Mrs. Casley, the housekeeper at the Grange. She was the widow of a brave officer, who had died fighting his country's battles, and left nothing behind him but a penniless widow, whose friends had always looked cold upon

her, on account of what they termed her imprudent match. As may easily be imagined, they looked colder still on her distress and bereavement. One lady, indeed, whose temper was none of the best, offered to engage her as companion at "a liberal stipend," so her letter phrased it, "of fifteen pounds a-year," and was considerably surprised when her generous offer met with a civil refusal, as the widow had now discovered another friend, whose proffered assistance she was more disposed to accept.

Lieutenant Casley had bequeathed to his wife a note, folded up in the last letter he ever sent her, addressed to his old commander General Rodomont. The missive had been duly forwarded, but for some weeks no reply was received. At length the widow received a visit from the General in person, who begged her to undertake the charge of his only daughter. When this young lady

died, Mrs. Casley remained at the Grange, where she discharged the functions of a housekeeper, but was always treated by the General and his servants with the respect and consideration due to her former rank. Like a true lady, she took no advantage of this, but mixed freely with the families of the leading tradesmen, who regarded her with the greatest affection and esteem.

The other person I alluded to was Mr. Mayflower, the usher of the grammar-school, who had been an old playmate of my mother's in her younger days. He was a tall, weather-beaten man, who had left his native place at the age of eighteen and returned to it at forty poorer than when he set out. He had, however, wondrous tales to tell of his struggles and adventures, and of the scenes which he had witnessed in foreign lands, for at one time

he had made several voyages in the capacity of a captain's clerk.

Having picked up various accomplishments and odd scraps of learning during his travels, he was considered a fit and proper person to fill the post of under-master at the grammar-school, an office which, by his own confession, he accepted because he thought himself incapable of succeeding in anything else. However, he discharged his duties better than might have been expected, and won the hearts both of parents and schoolboys by his narratives, some of which I thought in after days were very marvellous indeed.

As Mr. Mayflower was a constant visitor at our house after my father's death, there were not wanting ill-natured people who affirmed that my mother would soon take a second husband; but I feel confident that she encouraged his visits more for my sake

than for her own, as I liked nothing so much as to sit with him over our winter fire and to listen to his long tales about foreign parts.

It was now time for me to think of settling to something ; but this I found my mind was in no hurry to do. I was conscious of entertaining a dislike to business, but not so clear as to my vocation to anything else. Sometimes, when I watched the stately form of the rector as he advanced up the aisle in his surplice, I thought I should like to be a clergyman ; but then came before my eyes the idea of Mr. Templeton, with his saintly character and warm-hearted self-denial, and I felt as though I were not yet good enough for that. At other times I wished to be an artist or an architect, as I turned over my portfolio of sketches, and heard my mother praise my execution of them, while there were seasons

when I stretched myself on the newly-mown hay with a book in my hand, luxuriating in the sunshine, the song of birds, and the sparkling brook, and wishing that life could be, like that hour of leisure, one continued and unbroken summer day's dream.

My mother was ill satisfied with this vacillation, which she clearly discerned, although, in pursuance with Mr. Templeton's advice, I used all my endeavours to conceal it from her. She had, as I have already hinted, little taste for books, and the active engrossment in business, which had been at first a refuge and a solace from mournful thoughts, was now becoming to her a second nature. My awkwardness in the shop gave her a pain that she could not always conceal, and one day finding me copying out an account with a book by my side, she flung it angrily away, saying that "books were only fit for idle gentlefolks, who had nothing

to do, and not for them that had their bread to earn."

I was looking very red and annoyed at this when Mrs. Casley entered, and both of us, smoothing down our faces as well as we could, hastened to usher her into the back parlour.

"You have come in at an awkward moment, Ma'am," said my mother, recovering with a strong effort her usual good-humour. "George and I have been quarrelling about his reading, and I've been telling him that he'll never make a tradesman."

"Ah! you sad boy," said Mrs. Casley, "I am afraid I have had a finger in spoiling you, as the General says I do every one about our house. But come, Mrs. Singleton, you must not be cross with him; he may turn out a genius, you know."

"But geniuses are always poor," remonstrated my mother.

“ We were not all born to be rich, Mrs. Singleton. Besides, some scholars are well off. There’s young Morton, the son of the General’s bootmaker in London, has been made the Fellow of a college.”

“ But I shouldn’t exactly like my son to be a Fellow,” said my mother. “ Isn’t it them who change the plates for the young gentlemen, and wear a sort of livery ?”

“ Oh no ! you are thinking of a Sizar. Fellows are rich, and live very well I believe ; only they mustn’t marry, which I own I don’t think quite a good thing for young people.”

“ Well now, Ma’am,” replied my mother, “ I don’t like that, and, in fact, I’ve set my mind on George’s succeeding to the shop, and marrying some nice good-humoured farmer’s daughter ; and then, you know, I can live with them, and keep their house in my old days.”

“I’m afraid he would not like it,” said Mrs. Casley. “When he has been to see me at the Grange, I have often got him to read to me books of travels, the Spectator, or the Vicar of Wakefield; and you have no idea how his eye brightened up, and his reading improved when we got upon anything in the way of adventures. No, Mrs. Singleton, that boy, depend upon it, (don’t colour so, George) must and will see the world.”

“Well,” said my mother, “I wish he wouldn’t have these fancies. There’s my poor brother, who went to France as a tutor, and for twenty years we heard nothing about him except from Mr. Mayflower, who knew him in foreign parts.”

“Yes! but you know, mother,” I interposed, “we had a letter from him the other day, in which he says he has a flourishing school near London.”

“Ah, George!” she replied, “I see you want to go a rambling, too. Well, well, I must speak to Mr. Templeton, and I’ll abide by what he says. Won’t you take a cup of tea with us, Mrs. Casley?”

“Thank you, but I have to go and see about the distribution of blankets which the General has ordered for the poor; so, good evening, Mrs. Singleton. And you, my young friend, keep up your spirits, and you shall yet have your stock of adventures, like Dr. Johnson and George Primrose.”

When the tea-things had been washed up—a ceremony my mother always performed in person—she took her bonnet and cloak, and went off to see Mr. Templeton, while I occupied my leisure in the shop in ruminating over what had passed between her and our visitor. Mr. Mayflower came in soon after my mother’s departure, and we talked about travelling and foreign lands

until her return. She told me that Mr. Templeton wished to speak to me on the following morning; and then we all joined in conversation on ordinary topics, and no further allusion was made to the subject which had occasioned her visit.

CHAPTER II.

THE next morning, as we were sitting at breakfast, a letter arrived, bearing the London post-mark. My mother opened it ; and, after a hasty perusal, handed it to me, carefully watching my countenance as I ran through its contents. They were as follows :

“ My dear Sister,

“ In your last letter to me you mentioned your son, whose head, you seem to think, is too full of his studies to leave much room

for business. Such being the case, you will perhaps be glad to hear that there is a chance of his being employed in a pursuit more congenial with his inclinations. A gentleman with whom I have some acquaintance requires a tutor, or rather a companion, for his son, who is about to make a tour on the continent. If George be what you represent him, there could not be a fitter person for this post; and I shall be delighted to recommend him. The salary is liberal, and the advantages offered by the connexion not to be despised.

“Your affectionate brother,

“EDWARD SAINSBY.”

My features, I am sure, expressed the joy which I felt at the proposal, and my anxiety that it should be accepted. But I looked up, and caught my mother's tearful eye and pale countenance as she murmured :

“It is as I feared—you want to leave me, George.”

“Dear mother,” I answered, “I have no such wish ; but this offer is one that I feel would so suit me, and—”

“Well, be it so then,” she interrupted, sighing. “I was selfish to wish to oppose it, but it will be a hard struggle, my dear.” And she hid her face in her handkerchief.

I went up to her, and taking her hand, pressed it to my bosom, while I endeavoured to comfort her.

“Do not cry so, mother. I will take the letter to Mr. Templeton, who will advise us both for the best. You know he always tells us what is good and true.”

I seized my hat, and bent my steps towards the farm-house. On the road I felt myself a prey to conflicting emotions. I desired to go, and yet it seemed selfish and

unkind to leave my mother alone in her widowhood. I was her only child—the being in whom she had “garnered up her heart”—and to abandon her thus, for my own gratification, appeared a step wanting in affection and filial duty. But then there rose before me gay and enticing visions of beautiful cities and fair lands, the thoughts of which had haunted me in my boyish dreams. I tried to reason myself out of my compunction. All mothers felt pain at parting with their sons, and yet such partings were among the ordinary occurrences of life. My mother would soon get over it, and I should return to her some day wealthy and happy.

O sacred maternal love! how many wounds does the selfish, unheeding waywardness of those inflict upon thee, who owe everything to thy patient uncomplaining self-sacrifice !

By the time I arrived at the farm-house, I had almost persuaded myself that I ought to accept my uncle's proposal, and felt confident that Mr. Templeton would sanction my departure.

I found him in his room. The Bible lay open before him, and a cushion hard by seemed rumpled as if he had just risen from his knees. He pointed to a chair, and listened attentively as I unfolded to him my feelings and wishes, and concluded by placing in his hands the letter which we had lately received. He read it, and paused as if he expected me to speak. I said hesitatingly :

“Your advice, dear Sir, as to this offer is—”

“Not to accept it,” he answered, in a firm and decided manner.

It was a blow for which I had not prepared myself, and I felt acutely the disap-

pointment of my hopes. He continued, in a gentler tone :

“ My dear young friend, I feel for the sorrow I see I inflict, but self-sacrifice is the first duty of a Christian. You must not leave a mother who leans upon you as the only stay now left to her. It is your first act of self-negation ; but bear it bravely, and submit to it cheerfully. Remember Him,” he added, laying his hand reverently on the open book, “ whom we all venerate, and whose example we are bound to follow. Struggle with your feelings manfully, and in subduing this every-day temptation, you will have gained a victory almost equal to that which has crowned the brows of many a martyr. And now, before we part, let us seek for strength at that source where alone it is to be found.”

I rose from my knees an altered being, ashamed of my wayward selfishness, and

determined, for the future to act only for the good of others. This I resolved should be my first step in the career which I had imposed upon myself—this should be the great end and business of my existence. And while I felt the hardness and difficulty of the task which lay before me, and knew that the repinings in my heart were only crushed and not extinct, I experienced a peaceful sensation of calm and placid satisfaction, that seemed to congratulate me on the first advantage which I had gained in my arduous warfare.

I returned home, put on my coarse coat and apron and took my station in the shop. My books were laid aside, and I indulged myself in reading only at intervals, which I rigorously measured out. My task cost me many repinings; but I was determined to go through with it, and to conceal by every possible means the distaste which it

gave me. My efforts were not in vain, and I felt a strange and hitherto unknown pleasure in watching the gratified face of my poor mother and hearing the remarks of Mrs. Casley, who frequently expressed her astonishment that her imaginative and romantic *protégé* was settling down at last into a plain, sober tradesman.

In this manner months passed away, and the dreaming youth was becoming a thoughtful man, awakening more and more to the stern realities of life. Of this period I have nothing to record. With individuals as with nations, the peaceful and prosperous seasons of existence are those which supply the fewest materials to the historian. Another trial, however, was awaiting me before I was driven forth into the world. One autumn my mother fell sick, and died.

I shall not attempt to describe her last moments, or my own feelings as I watched

her slowly receding into eternity. There are scenes sacred to the memory and the heart, which the mind recoils from attempting to delineate, lest by embodying them in language, it should sink into mere declamation and affected pathos. Suffice it to say, that although, while I gazed on the pale countenance, whose fond and familiar lineaments brought before me, as in a dream, the happiest hours of my existence, many painful recollections of duties undone, and affection ill-requited, rushed into my mind, there was one act which I could recall even then with satisfaction, and thank God sincerely and heartily that He had given me grace to perform it.

CHAPTER III.

WHEN the first emotions of grief had subsided, I felt that it was incumbent upon me to reflect on my course for the future. The loss I had sustained, and the consciousness that now there existed no bar to my following out my former inclinations, had caused them, in some measure, to revive. I had for some time been engaged in visiting a poor district under the supervision of Mr. Templeton, and my mind, sobered down by recent events, seemed to entertain

with a seriousness befitting the subject, the idea of entering the sacred ministry of the Church. I ventured to broach the matter to my excellent friend one day as we were walking together to the parish school-room. He thought over it for a few minutes, and then said :

“ Well, George, I cannot but approve of your design, and I think from what you say, that you have qualifications for the ministry which I should be loth to see overlooked. But you must remember that your means, even when you have disposed of your business, will be but small, and our Universities unhappily are now no longer what they were intended to be, the *Almæ Matres* of poor scholars. Your income you would require to supply the short-comings of a curate’s low stipend, and a college course demands an outlay which, at present, you ought not to think

of making. However, perhaps General Rodomont, who is a liberal-minded man, might not object to assist you. I will call upon him, and see how he is disposed."

With this assurance he left me, and I strolled slowly towards the Grange, respecting the proprietor of which, as the reader is shortly to be introduced to him, I may here insert a few particulars.

General Rodomont was in person a tall, upright, old gentleman, whose powdered hair, military queue, and gold-headed cane, stirred up reminiscences of a bygone generation. It was his frequent boast that his ancestors had occupied the Grange since the days of the Conqueror, and so strong an idea did he entertain of the sanctity of that time-honoured pile, that he could never bring himself to allow any repairs to be made in it. Although many of the apart-

ments were falling into decay, the General repelled with disdain several offers from eminent architects to restore his mansion. He always averred that he detested Nineteenth Century Gothic, which assertion, perhaps, was partly occasioned by his disgust at the audacity of a retired manufacturer, who had ventured to erect in the neighbourhood an edifice of staring red brick, which he entitled the Priory, and eulogized as a most elegant specimen of the Elizabethan style. The General was very liberal to the poor, and scrupulously civil to his servants and the townspeople, he prided himself especially on his church principles, and hated mortally every species of dissent.

As I was passing the old Gothic doorway of the Grange, Mrs. Casley issued from it, and saying she wished to speak to me, asked me to wait a few minutes in her room

while she executed a few commissions in the town. I accordingly ascended to this apartment which I knew very well, having frequently visited its occupant with my mother, the recollection of whom it brought vividly before me. I seated myself in rather a melancholy mood, and did not notice that a door which opened into the picture-gallery had been left slightly ajar. Presently, however, the sound of voices without fell upon my ear, and I soon distinguished those of the General, his nephew Mr. St. Leonard, and Mr. Templeton, engaged in an animated conversation. Not liking to shut the door, and thus attract their attention, I sat still, and was an unwilling listener to what was going on.

“I assure you,” said the General, in his blandest tone, “I assure you, Mr. Templeton that I have the highest respect for the Church, and for yourself individually.

Indeed, you should have been our Rector if the proprietor of this house possessed his legitimate influence in the disposal of the living, which my ancestors, I believe, endowed; but you know it belongs to the Chapter, and the Archdeacon, whose turn it was to nominate, was so shabby as to present himself."

"I am much indebted to you, General, for your kind intentions," said Mr. Templeton, "but I think we are slightly straying from the point. Young Singleton—"

"Is a very worthy young man, I have no doubt," was the reply, "and as such he shall always have my patronage and support. But—I speak to you, Mr. Templeton, as a man of good family, without reserve—it really does appear to me that persons of a very inferior grade are intruding themselves into the church. Now there's the son of my bootmaker has actually got a Fellowship.

You smile, St. Leonard, but let me tell you, that though it may suit you with your levelling, Young-England notions, it does not suit me."

"But, General," said Mr. St. Leonard, "as the Church increases, she will require her ministers to be increased also; and I doubt whether among the higher and more respectable classes you will find enough volunteers to supply the growing want. Then we have an extensive middle class, into whose ranks the more educated of the poor are slowly working their way."

"All owing to this stuff about popular education," growled the General.

"Why," laughed Mr. St. Leonard, "you would object, uncle, to St. Peter himself, if he mounted the pulpit of the parish church, on the ground that he, as a fisherman, was one of the lower classes."

"Nonsense, Sir," said the General, "the

profession of a clergyman is that of a gentleman, and must be kept so. We have already too many low-born men in it, and I hear with great alarm that some of the bishops contemplate ordaining persons who have never even had an university education."

"And why should they not," inquired Mr. St. Leonard, "if the parties in question are men of piety and sufficient learning?"

"Well," said the General, "it will never do. Mr. Templeton, I am grieved to refuse you, but you see my principles will not allow me to assist this young man in the way you desire. Permit me to attend you."

Here the conversation terminated, and not feeling disposed to await the arrival of Mrs. Casley, I hurried away and soon overtook Mr. Templeton, to whom I mentioned at once my having overheard the General's reception of his kind endeavours.

"I am sorry, deeply sorry, my dear George," said Mr. Templeton, laying his hand kindly on my shoulder, "that the General should view things in this light, and I fear that one reason which drives many a talented, earnest-minded youth into the ranks of dissent, is the small encouragement given to him in the church of his fathers, when he feels within him the consciousness of the ability, and of the call to declare the truths of the Gospel to his fellow men. But now I must leave you, as I am going to visit poor widow Johnson."

Proceeding up the street towards my own house, I met Mr. Mayflower, who would insist on my accompanying him to his lodgings, to taste some wine which he had recently received as a present from Mr. Mucklethrift, the Scotch wine-merchant, in acknowledgment of the worthy usher's attentions to his son and heir.

“Now, George,” said Mr. Mayflower, as we took our seats by his fire, “I have been for some time longing to give you a piece of advice. You know I’m a man of experience, as I ought to be, having beheld, as the old Greek says, ‘so many cities and men.’ And the long and short of what I have to say is—why don’t you go out and see the world? You have no ties here; you have a little money of your own, and are besides, a lad of spirit, and fond of adventure.”

“But I have no pursuit, no occupation to turn to,” said I.

“Write to your Uncle Sainsby, he no doubt can help you to something, but do not vegetate here. Only think, if I had done so, where would have been my experience and knowledge of the world? As it is, you see, my dear boy, I am looked up to as an oracle on all matters; even old

Chuff, the surly attorney, holds his peace when I speak."

At this juncture, Mrs. Robson the landlady entered, holding a dressing-case in her hands. Mr. Mayflower rose from his chair as if to seek a little private conference with her, but she burst out.

"They're false—they're false, I told 'ee they were, Mr. Mayflower, but 'ee would'nt believe I."

"What is false, what is the matter?" I inquired.

"The things the Polish man left, Mr. George," said Mrs. Robson in a triumphant tone. "Bless'ee, Mr. Mayflower be always talking of his knowledge of the world, and a child might cheat he. Why it's not two years come Michaelmas, since he bought old Dillon, the horse jockey's spavined poney which—"

"Hold your chattering tongue, woman,"

said Mr. Mayflower, indignantly, "and leave the room. I will be responsible, as I told you, only don't spread the news all over the town."

The landlady obeyed the command, and went grumbling down stairs, when Mr. Mayflower, turning to me, said :

"The fact is, George, I am once again, as I often have been, the victim of good-nature. You see a few days ago Timson of the 'Cock in Boots,' came to me with a message from a Polish gentleman, who, he said, was in distress, and could not speak a word of English. Now my heart always warms to foreigners, for I too have been a stranger in a foreign land. So I went, thinking to myself, 'well, I am an old man of the world, he can't impose upon me.' The stranger spoke French fluently, said he was a Count something or other, travelling in England, and delayed for want

of remittances. 'Could I procure him a lodging for a few days?' Well Sir, I questioned him, his answers seemed correct enough. He brought out this small box, opened it, and showed me what certainly appeared gold chains and trinkets. So I asked him here, and got him a room from Mrs. Robson, thinking his story probable, and despising the vulgar prejudices of that fellow Timson against foreigners, and so forth. 'However,' thinks I, 'an old man of the world should be on the safe side,' so I manœuvred to get hold of his trinket box, saying I had a cupboard in my own room where it would be safer than with him. He seemed unwilling at first to part with it, which increased my belief in its value. Thought I, as I locked it up, 'we have you securely now my fine fellow; a man of experience is not to be caught tripping.' What would you have more? My friend has

absconded, and his ornaments don't appear to be worth a sou."

" Oh! Mr. Mayflower," said I, " I did not think you would have been taken in so."

" Nonsense, my dear fellow, it might have happened to the cleverest person in the world. Don't you think so? How was I to know the things were copper? and that there was anything the matter with the unlucky pony which that foolish woman was chattering about. Every man is not necessarily a goldsmith or a horse-jockey. But what annoys me is, that these people here will get hold of the story, as they did of that about the pony, and I shall never hear the last of it. They are such a conceited set, that they can never believe that a man who has been travelling about all his life must know more of the world and its ways than folks who have

never been five miles from their own chimney-corner. And then they throw these little mistakes in my face, as if I ever pretended to be infallible. Well, Mrs. Robson," he continued, as the landlady re-entered, "what is it?"

"Why, Mr. Mayflower, Mr. Templeton has sent you two tickets for the Missionary Meeting in the school-room, knowing as you likes 'furrin' parts so much."

There was a malicious twinkle in Mrs. Robson's eye as she uttered these last words, but Mr. Mayflower did not observe it, and said to me :

"Well, George, will you come? For my part, I should like to go anywhere just now, to get this Polish fellow's business out of my head."

When we reached the school-room, we found it lighted up, and a temporary platform erected on which were seated the

principal clergy and gentry of the neighbourhood. As the Rector was absent, Mr. Templeton was by universal consent voted into the chair, and the proceedings commenced.

A little stout gentleman, with a most loquacious appearance, made the first speech. His ideas seemed to outrun his power of expressing them, and he made several mistakes, at which there was no small merriment, though the little gentleman took it in good part, attributing it doubtless to the effect of his own facetiousness. He wound up by assuring us, that during the last ten years, "the Society had preached the Gospel in four uninhabited islands, and distributed the Scriptures in seven unknown tongues."

A suppressed titter was running through the assembly, which Mr. Templeton put a stop to by addressing the speaker in a good-humoured manner, and presuming that he

meant islands uninhabited by Europeans, and foreign languages.

“Precisely, my dear Sir, of course I intended that,” said the little gentleman, colouring at his mistake, which he endeavoured to cover by telling an anecdote of a Cherokee chief, whom he had met at dinner, and who had recited to him two lines in the Indian language, the especial beauty of which were he feared, untranslatable, but they meant something like this

“Go on, my friends, work on, my friends ;

Go on, my friends, go on !”

This eloquence seemed getting rather soporific, and many of the audience yawned very perceptibly, when happily a new speaker presented himself. He was a tall, square-built man, with dark eyes, lank hair, and unimpressive countenance, from which one would have augured little that was calcu-

lated to move or to impress an audience. He spoke of the trials and hardships which he had undergone in the Missionary cause, of the persecutions he had suffered, and the converts he had made. As he proceeded, and warmed with the theme, the dull features were lighted up with animation, the dark eyes kindled, and a torrent of earnest, overpowering eloquence burst from his lips. The audience seemed perfectly carried away, tears fell from some; and when he concluded, deafening sounds of applause broke forth as if they were the welcome outlet of those sympathies which had hitherto been held bound in listening and mute attention.

That night I dreamed that I was a Missionary, preaching in a strange tongue to strangers in a far-distant land; while beside me, there stood the speaker of the preceding evening with the garb and demeanour of St. Paul.

CHAPTER IV.

FOR some days after the occurrences mentioned in the last chapter, I had been engaged in disposing of my business to a person who had made me what all my friends considered an advantageous offer for it. I was advised to take this step by Mr. Templeton, who saw clearly that my heart was not in it, and therefore impressed upon me the advisability of securing what I could from the shop while it continued in a flourishing condition. Having arranged the transfer, I was left at leisure to study my own thoughts and feelings.

The idea of devoting myself to a Missionary life had impressed me strongly ever since the meeting already described. The prospect of obtaining employment in the Church at home seemed hopeless, and I felt an aversion to labour and toil, when their object was merely to benefit myself. The example of Mr. Templeton, for whose character I felt the deepest admiration and the warmest affection, made me desirous of emulating a career so noble and so productive of countless blessings to all around him. It must be, I often thought, a mission worth living for, that draws forth the love of hundreds, that associates us in our work with God Himself, and enables us to go through a world of sorrow, tracking the footsteps of Him who came to redeem it.

I walked out one evening full of these thoughts, and my path led me to some ancient Druidical remains, which lay scattered

upon the plain near our town. There, tradition reported, had been the proudest temple of a sanguinary creed, now happily effaced by the benignant influences of Christianity. Around those demon altars had risen the shrieks of despairing mothers, wailing over their murdered babes, and now these silent stones remained only as the trophies of that victorious faith which Apostles preached, and for which martyrs had died.

And as the remembrance of the first great Missionaries came upon me, and stirred up within thoughts too deep for utterance, I threw myself on my knees in the midst of that mystic circle, and solemnly consecrated my strength and powers, both of body and mind, to this great work.

A hand was laid gently on my shoulder, and Mr. Templeton stood beside me. For some minutes neither of us spoke, for both

were wrapt in their own feelings. At length he said abruptly :

“ George, you must be a Missionary. I have been thinking over your future course, and considering calmly, and I trust prayerfully, what I know of your character and feelings, and to whatever point I turn myself mentally, this idea seems to encounter me. They say that there are certain convictions which flash upon the mind almost intuitively, and this appears to be one of them. Yet we must be careful not to indulge a feeling of this kind too far. The question now will be, how does your own heart respond to it ?”

In reply, I told him what my thoughts had been, and how anxious I was at once to take the step. He examined me searchingly as to my motives, intentions, and the ideas which I entertained of a Missionary's duty and obligations, and then lifting his hands solemnly to Heaven, as the moonbeams

played upon his grey hairs and venerable features, he breathed a prayer for my direction and guidance in the solemn and arduous calling to which I had dedicated myself.

When we came to his dwelling, he pressed me to enter, and we discussed several matters bearing upon my admission into the Missionary College. It was determined that I should write to my Uncle Sainsby, begging him to procure a lodging for me in London, while Mr. Templeton communicated with the Secretary of the Society to which he intended to recommend me.

In a few days, all these preliminaries having been arranged, I prepared to leave, for the first time, my home and friends. The parting scenes were sorrowful enough, especially that with Mr. Templeton, whom I venerated as a father. I was also much grieved when I shook hands with worthy Mr. Mayflower, who came with me to the

coach, and gave me a vast amount of advice, suggested, he said, by his experience as a man of the world, to all of which I was, I fear, but an indifferent listener.

When we reached London, my first endeavour was to find my way to the metropolitan suburb of ——, where my uncle resided. He had given me a warm invitation to stay with him as long as I might find it necessary, and I had determined to accept his offer. I was perplexed and bewildered by the labyrinth of streets through which the hackney-coach proceeded, and felt thankful when it stopped before a large house with a garden in front, over the gateway of which the light of the neighbouring lamp enabled me to read “Wolverton Academy,” inscribed in large old English characters.

The door was opened by a stout, good-humoured-looking woman of middle age, who seemed by her appearance a superior

servant or housekeeper. She ushered me into a large room with a comfortable fire, and a portrait of Dr. Johnson over the chimney-piece. On the round table in the centre were several works on education, and a volume of Cowper's poems, with which I amused myself until my uncle made his appearance.

He was a short, spare man, whose rigid features seemed as if they had been for some time drying in the smoke of his study fire, and had retained a sort of dingy uncertain colour from the effects of that process. His eyes were deeply sunk in his head, and his hair appeared to be of that obstinate character which would stand erect in spite of all efforts to subdue it into regularity. Silver spectacles, with the bridge turned upside down, garnished his nose, and an old flannel dressing-gown, smeared over with ink stains, decorated his person. But I forgot all these little

peculiarities when he cordially grasped my hand, and bade me welcome in the kindest and most unaffected manner to Wolverton Academy.

The housekeeper, who had admitted me, followed him hastily into the room, and he immediately turned to her and said :

“ Mrs. Dawson, let a room up-stairs be got ready immediately for the new pup—, I mean for my nephew.”

“ I’ll see to that,” she replied ; “ but, Mr. Sainsby, Sir, you have left your watch-key up-stairs.”

These latter words were pronounced in such a mysterious and would be significative tone, that I was somewhat dubious as to their import. My uncle seemed equally at a loss, for he looked at the bottom of his waistcoat, and dragging forth by the chain a huge repeater, exclaimed : “ No I have not, here they both are.”

This intimation appeared, however, to have no effect on the housekeeper, who, throwing as much meaning as she could into her broad good-humoured face, again repeated :

“ You have left your watch-key up-stairs, Sir.”

My uncle cast a wondering uncertain glance over his whole person, and apparently detected something wrong, for he muttered : “ True, true ! very absurd—I forgot—my old dressing-gown,” and hurriedly left the apartment.

The housekeeper, I suppose, observed some astonishment in my face for she drew up to me, and said confidentially :

“ You see, Mr. Singleton, your good uncle, worthy man, is a great scholar and wonderfully clever in his books ; but, bless you, he has no more idea of his dress than a baby. Why he would sit for days and days in that room of his, with a blanket round him, if a

body would let him, and never heed it at all. Once he came down to a lady, who was here about a pupil, without either coat or waist-coat on, and the lady, who was an American, I heard went away quite shocked. Now you know, Sir, this wouldn't do in an establishment like ours, for as I often says to Mr. Sainsby, 'folks, Sir, always goes by appearances in this here wicked world,' and so I'm obliged to look close after master. But you know, Sir, it wouldn't exactly do for me, that's a servant, to tell him of these things before people who might despise him for it; not knowing that his head is so stuffed with Greek and Hebrew that he can't think of anything else, and so it's agreed between us that I should give him a sort of hint, you see, when he comes down not dressed as he should be, and tell him that he's left something behind, for, of course, I can't be a following him about all day, and he

oftentimes slips down without my knowing."

"A very excellent plan," said I.

"Yes, Sir; but sometimes master don't catch at what I means as quick as I wish, and then it's awkward. I remember, one day, there came rich Mr. Tidiman, whose father was a tailor, and he, they say, brought up at the charity-school, though he don't like to hear of that now. Well, in he walks, looking as spruce as one of them figures in his father's shop, and my poor master, sure enough, was sitting here in his old threadbare waistcoat, and without a neckcloth, for it was during the midsummer holidays. Well, Mr. Tidiman looks at him disdainful like, and snuffs up his ho-de-koloned pocket handkercher, and there was master a smiling and bowing as innocent as any born babe. 'Mister Sainsby, Sir,' says I, 'your tailor is a waiting to

see you.' 'Well,' says master, 'let him wait while I'm speaking to Mr. Tidiman.' So I says again and again, 'Your tailor is a waiting,' and master did not take it for some time, while there stood Mr. Tidiman looking as black as thunder, and thinking, I dare say, I meant it all at him. But bless you, Sir, though he's so simple like in these matters, he's as good as an angel; and he'll read you twenty pages of Greek and Hebrew as easy as I'd dust a table."

I was equally amused and pleased with Mrs. Dawson's affection for her master, and evident pride in his scholarship, for she clearly considered him one of the most learned men in the world, but I asked her whether these eccentricities did not excite some ridicule in the school-room.

"Oh no, Sir!" said Mrs. Dawson. "Master always breakfasts in his little study, and I goes in there every morning, as regular

as clockwork, to see he's all proper before he begins business."

And now Uncle Sainsby made his entry, dressed in a sober suit of black, with a white cravat, and his spectacles re-adjusted.

Mrs. Dawson eyed him all over with the air of a careful mother inspecting the habiliments of a favourite son, and left the room perfectly satisfied, and proud of her master's appearance.

"I expect," said my uncle, "it is now time for our vespertinal repast. We shall be joined by two other gentlemen. One is Mr. Monçada, a merchant of the Jewish persuasion, whom I knew abroad; the other is my assistant, Mr. Ranson, a nice young man, but sadly given to long words and round-about phrases—a vice, I fear, my dear boy, to which many of our profession are prone—in fact, he is a great student of style, and regularly copies out, every morning, a

page of the ‘Rambler’ before breakfast. For the rest, he is *puer honestus*—the term *honestus*, as you are of course aware, implying an amount of moral virtue not usually contemplated by the English derivative—*honestus*, in truth, being derived from *honos* honour, and frequently found coupled with *honoratus*, is—”

But I must not weary the reader with my worthy uncle’s philological speculations, which he pursued for some time with his eyes fixed on the fire, and apparently unconscious of my presence. A pause, however, in his disquisition enabled me to recall my existence to his remembrance, and assure him that I should be glad to make Mr. Ranson’s acquaintance. I added, too, that I could not help liking those little personal peculiarities, which often give a raciness to individual character, and relieve the monotonous and common-place uniformity which a high state

of social civilization is calculated to produce.

My uncle seemed to feel the little compliment implied, and answered smilingly :

“ True, George ; people now-a-days resemble, as somebody says, pieces of monetary coinage, jumbled together in a bag, which, by perpetual rubbing against one another, wear out their distinctive marks. But here are our friends, and so we must go into supper.”

Mr. Ranson, a flaxen-headed young man, with a florid complexion, sandy hair, and wondering blue eyes, that never remained stationary for a moment, came forward to meet us as we entered. He made a low bow to me, and taking the tips of my fingers, said, with an air that seemed anxiously polite :

“ Permit me, Mr. Singleton, to have the felicity of saluting you. Allow me to ven-

ture the hope that your journey has not been disagreeable.”

My uncle darted towards me a look of sly good humour while he introduced the other gentleman as Mr. Monçada.

I had always felt a warm interest in his race, and therefore scanned his figure with a curious eye as I returned his salutation. The only Jew that ever crossed my path before was a certain David Levi, the old clothesman in our town, who certainly did not seem to me a favourable representative of the present descendants of the Hebrew prophets and kings. But Mr. Monçada struck me at once as the perfect realization of that ideal which I had formed in my own mind as I pored over the inspired history of Israel. He was not tall, but his well-knit and justly-proportioned figure bore the signs of mental energy and muscular strength. His dark flashing eyes and aquiline nose

gave to his countenance a noble and commanding air, while his broad manly forehead and thick clustering locks of dark luxuriant hair might have been selected by a painter as the fitting model of the Jupiter Tonans of the old heathen mythology.

During our meal, Mr. Ranson begged that “Mr. Monçada would not repudiate the opportunity of giving us some account of his late travels in the East.” To my great delight, he acceded to the request, and drew an eloquent and touching picture of the present state of Palestine under the brutal tyranny and ignorant incapacity of the Turks. He spoke of the sacred city, and his noble brow was over-clouded as he deplored the degradation of his people in many parts of Europe and Asia, and the sufferings which they were still obliged to undergo.

“But do you not think, Monçada,” in-

quired my uncle, "that there is a great change now working with regard to your race? Scarce a century ago, they were proscribed and persecuted exiles, existing on sufferance in every country of Europe. In fact, we might almost use the words of Cornelius Tacitus and Suetonius with respect to them, and say—" Here, fortunately, my uncle apparently remembered that the distinguished writers in question had not expressed themselves in the most complimentary manner; and anxious to break off his speech, he challenged Mr. Ranson to take wine, filling, at the same time, his own glass from the vinegar cruet which stood near him.

After the slight confusion occasioned by this little mistake had subsided, Mr. Moncada replied to my uncle's first question :

"Unquestionably there is. In Germany many Hebrews have highly distinguished

themselves in literature and science. One of the most eminent of English philanthropists is of the Jewish race. Several of your best writers for the daily papers claim the same origin ; and even in Catholic France, Jews have made their voices heard in the senate and at the bar. I trust, indeed, the time may soon come when all Christian nations, without exception, will cease to look down upon that people to whom they owe originally the religion which they profess, and the germ of that civilization of which they are so proud."

The conversation then turned upon the habits and customs of the modern Hebrews ; and Monçada, perceiving me to be interested in the recital which he gave, said kindly :

"As you appear curious about our manners, Mr. Singleton, you must come and pass an evening with me. My daughter

Rachel is a great collector of all the old legends and tales current among our people, and may probably be able to enlighten you on these subjects better than I can."

I assured him that I would not fail to make use of his kind invitation; and shortly after, he took leave of us for the evening.

The next morning, I set out in company with Mr. Ranson to discover the office of the Society, for the Secretary of which I had brought a letter of recommendation from Mr. Templeton. When we reached our destination, I was obliged to wait for a few moments in an outer room where several clerks were writing, who, from time to time, cast curious glances at me, as if they guessed the object of my visit. By-and-bye, a door opened, and the Secretary entered, showing out the Missionary clergyman whose eloquent address had been the means of first directing my attention to the

great work. I had met him once or twice afterwards at Mr. Templeton's, and he bestowed on me a kind nod of recognition in passing as I walked into the inner office.

I found the Secretary a plain business-like clergyman, kind yet straightforward in his manners, though somewhat brusque in his first address. He made some very sensible remarks on the nature of Missions, and the character of those who ought to undertake them. "I have read," he continued, "Mr. Templeton's note, and am satisfied with its contents. Let me, however, warn you Mr. Singleton, against too sentimental an estimate of the Missionary career. It requires undoubtedly enthusiasm, but there is a kind of enthusiasm which is too apt to flame up all of a sudden, and then moulder quietly away. That fire always lasts the longest where there is comparatively little blaze. You will now," he added, "see the

Examiners to whom we always refer our candidates for Missionary employment, and if their views coincide with mine, I have no doubt of your final approval and acceptance."

He then gave me three sealed notes, and shaking hands with me, desired one of the clerks to be my guide to the residence of the Reverend Montague Silvertongue, of ——Chapel, who stood first on the list of Examiners. The clerk was disposed to be communicative, and gave me several particulars with regard to Mr. Silvertongue, who he said was the minister of a very fashionable congregation, and noted for the polish of his manners. "You will not have much to apprehend from him," he added, "for though a little affected in his way of speaking, he is at bottom a good and kind-hearted man. Your worst ordeal will be with Mr. Rusk and Mr. Mitten, neither of

whom our candidates much like. The last has been an examiner at Oxford, and has a knack of crowding all kinds of subjects into one question; however you must keep up your courage, and I dare say you will do very well. Here we are at Mr. Silver-tongue's."

I thanked the clerk for his information and good wishes, and rang the bell which was opened by a well-dressed footman in black clothes, whom in my ignorance I at first supposed to be the reverend gentleman himself. He smiled at my mistake, and ushered me at once into the presence of his master.

Mr. Silvertongue was seated in a small study, surrounded with books, and leaning his forehead on his finger in a thoughtful attitude, very much resembling that which the artist had given him in a portrait hanging against the wall. Upon the writing-table

before him lay a number of ladies' cards, and some notes on embossed paper, still faintly redolent of perfume. He seemed about thirty, and had very white teeth, which appeared to great advantage when he smiled. His hands were very clean, and bore several rings, and his voice was almost too melodious to be manly.

"My dear Mr. Singleton," he said, when he had glanced over the Secretary's note, "I am delighted to see you. It is such a privilege to meet with a beloved candidate for the dear cause. And now let us know what were the first sweet emotions that drew you hitherward. Doubtless some vision of sunny lands, and incense breathing temples, or of those lovely gales of which our dear Bishop Heber speaks so charmingly, 'the spicy breezes' that 'blow soft from Ceylon's isle.'"

"I was rather puzzled as to his meaning,

he saw it, and good-naturedly came to my assistance.

“Some of our dear candidates,” he explained, “have seen in a dream interesting black men, who beckoned to them from afar, like the Macedonian of old. Come, do not be afraid to give me your confidence, my dear Mr. Singleton ; there is something so soothing, so beautifully poetical in the first dawning of missionary drawings in a beloved young mind.”

I could not help thinking that Mr. Silver-tongue and his favourite candidates would have been fit subjects for the caution which the Secretary had already given me that morning ; but, however, I ran through my simple story, which had the good fortune not to displease my auditor. He took notes of what I said, and then read the whole to me, embellished and decorated with such poetical phraseology, that I hardly knew my own words.

From Mr. Silvertongue's I proceeded to the house of Mr. Rusk. He was not at home, but I was told that I should be able to see him in the vestry of his church hard by. I went thither, and found a stern-featured gentleman, very negligently, not to say shabbily dressed, standing with his back to the fire in a small, comfortable room, which looked more like a study than a vestry, the shelves which surrounded it being filled with books of all sizes, from the venerable dusty folio of the ancient "Christian Father" to the last new religious tale. Mr. Rusk had apparently just risen from his studies, as several ponderous volumes lay before him, from which he was making copious extracts. Whether the interruption had imparted a little acerbity to his temper, I know not, but he addressed me in a very gruff tone, and answering my salutation with an impatient nod, told me "to sit down and come to the point at once." When I handed him the

note of introduction, he uttered a species of grunt, and cast it aside, saying, "he knew very well from whom it came."

"Now young man," he said, resuming his position at the fire, and waiting for a few minutes to arrange his coat-tails to his satisfaction. "Now, young man, you are a candidate for Missionary work. You want, in other words, to teach people. But have you anything to teach, for that's coming to the point?"

I said I hoped I had.

"So every one thinks," he replied ; "but now let me examine you a little. Who was Abraham's father? You hesitate? why, man, surely everybody who reads his Bible ought to know who Abraham's father was."

"I think, Sir," said I, "I could tell you, if you would inform me what was the name of Esau's eldest son."

"Do you remember?" he asked.

“ Yes, Sir, it is Eliphaz.”

“ Well, that is more than I did,” he said, good-humouredly, and then proceeded to examine me in various parts of Scripture and points of theology. His questions were characterized by a practical and common-sense directness which, I suppose, he would have called “ coming to the point ;” but he was rather impatient to obtain answers, and he often interrupted me in a way that might have sadly confused a more nervous candidate.

At last, when I hesitated a little about some question referring to the book of Job, Mr. Rusk caught me up triumphantly :

“ There now, I have puzzled you at last. You see you can’t answer even that simple question. I suppose now you would not even be able to tell me the difference between Job and me.”

“ I believe I can, Sir,” I answered. “ Job was specially commended for his patience.”

“ Come,” said Mr. Rusk, his staid features brightening into a smile, “ that’s not so bad, though it is against myself. Well, Mr. Singleton, to come to the point, I am very pleased with your examination, and shall tell the Secretary so to-morrow. You think me, I dare say, a very cross, odd fish ; but I have a great dislike to the sigh-away religious sentimentality which many young men, who are candidates for Missionary employment, get into their heads, and therefore I always do my best to batter it out of them. There is another thing,” he added, in a more serious tone, “ if a young man cannot stand a little sharp cross-questioning among friends at home, how will he meet the taunts and sneers of the enemies of Christianity abroad ? But come, it’s getting late, and you will not be able to see the other examiner to-day,

so I think, as you must feel rather hungry after all this talk, you had better dine with me."

I accepted the kind invitation, spent a most agreeable evening, and discovered that Mr. Rusk resembled much in character some of our choicest fruits, which envelop a sound and wholesome kernel in a rough and ungainly external shell.

The next morning I repaired to Mr. Mitten's house, where I found him busily engaged in editing a play of Euripides. On learning my errand, he rose from his seat, and stood confronting me with a wrinkled brow and upturned eyes, as if he were invoking some invisible power to aid him in puzzling an unfortunate candidate. His first question, if I recollect right, ran thus :

"Define missions, their bearing on mankind, how they have advanced or retarded the cause of civilization, and give a sketch

of their history from the days of St. Paul downwards."

I was about an hour in answering his question, being obliged to ask several times for a repetition of the several heads. While I was speaking, Mr. Mitten jotted down some marks on a slip of paper which lay before him. He then proceeded to enunciate his second query :

"Who were Augustine, Swartz, Guericke, Ignatius Loyola, and Fabricius? Give particulars in the life of each, a geographical sketch of the countries they visited, with an outline of the Buddhist, Romish, Confucian, Arian, Brahminical, and Pantheistic systems."

When I had got about half through my answer, the clock struck five, and Mr. Mitten informing me that he had an engagement, I returned, weary and exhausted, to my uncle's house.

CHAPTER V.

“MAY I venture to interrogate you, Mr. Singleton, on your intended operations this morning,” said Mr. Ranson to me, as we sat at breakfast the day after my examination.

“Why,” I replied, “as it is a leisure day with me, I do not think I can do better than call on Mr. Monçada.”

“A very proper thing,” said my uncle, “and, indeed, he seems highly interested in you, for I met him during my morning perambulation, and he asked after you very

cordially. By the way you will see his daughter Rachel, whom I have often likened in my mind to that Berenice, who nearly cost Titus his crown."

"She is, indeed, exquisitely beautiful," observed Mr. Ranson, "and recalls to my memory an engraving I beheld the other day at a music-seller's in Oxford Street."

"You make me curious," I replied. "Does she speak English?"

"Most orthographically," said Mr. Ranson, "and with a very mellifluous accent."

"Mellifluous," pondered my uncle, "from mel and fluo a compound which—"

"May I suggest to you a chop, Mr. Sainsby," hastily interrupted Mr. Ranson, colouring, as if conscious of having made some mistake in the application of his "*sesquipedalia verba*."

"Thank you, no, will you try one?"

"I prefer taking meat in the aggregate,"

replied Mr. Ranson, vigorously attacking a cold round of beef.

Breakfast was over, and my uncle remained for some minutes with his fingers engaged in fitting one of his egg-shells into the other, while his mind was doubtless busily occupied in chasing some derivation through the devious labyrinths of philology. All of a sudden he started up, nearly upsetting the tea-kettle, and after casting a hasty glance at the time-piece hurried out of the room without speaking. Mr. Ranson soon followed him, but prefaced his departure by a very ceremonious and verbose adieu.

Being thus left to myself, I felt at a loss how to employ the time. It was early to call on Mr. Monçada, and my mind felt in too unsettled a state to allow of my applying myself to serious study. I strolled into the library, and took down several venerable folios, but soon returned

them to their places again, and then walked to the window and looked towards the fields at the back of the house. It was winter; and a large pond, which had been frozen over during the night, had attracted a crowd of boys who were busily engaged in making slides. The pond was sufficiently near to enable me to see that the ice was insecure, and had already been broken in various places. Fearing lest some accident might happen, I tried to open the window and warn them of the danger which they might incur by venturing upon it, but I found the framework fixed and immoveable. I seized my hat and hurried out, but was too late to prevent the mischief I had foreseen. Just as I reached the bank one little fellow had started off, and his own impetus carried him onwards into the insecure part. The ice cracked beneath his feet, and his struggles to escape only increased the aper-

ture through which after a desperate effort or two he sank down.

His companions stood helpless and terrified on the bank, none of them daring to venture to his assistance. The boy's cries were most pitiable, and I determined to go myself to the rescue. I could swim tolerably well, and thought that I could easily extricate him with the help of a stick that I had in my hand. Advancing cautiously over the unbroken ice, I reached out to him the end of the stick which he clutched convulsively. It was well that he did for the next moment might have been his last, as the water was already drawing him under. I dragged him towards me in this manner, and got him safely to the bank where he fainted from terror and exhaustion.

In answer to my inquiries, the boys said that they knew nothing of him until he had joined their party that morning, nor could

they inform me where he lived. I looked down upon the poor little fellow as he lay on the grass, and could not help noticing the difference between his appearance, and that of his companions. They were all of that vagrant, hard-featured class that one meets with so frequently in the streets and lanes of great towns, who infest the suburban roads on Sundays and holidays, and put quiet passengers in fear by pelting each other with stones, or knocking wooden pellets about in every direction. He, on the contrary, was a well-formed, delicate child with mild blue eyes and an intellectual countenance, which even at first sight had caught my attention and distinguished him from the youthful Arabs of a brick and mortar desert by whom he was surrounded.

As he did not appear likely to recover speedily, I decided on carrying him into the house. One or two of the boys lent

their assistance, and we received some unexpected help from a man who had very much the appearance of a mendicant, and who seemed particularly interested about the boy. This man accompanied me into the house and watched with great attention, and, as I thought, deep emotion the effect of the restorative measures that were at once applied. The poor child soon became sensible, and the first words he uttered were "mother, mother."

"Do you know who his relations are?" said I to the beggar.

"I wish I did, Sir," was the reply. "But though I have known him for some years, I could never find that out."

"He is an orphan then?"

"I am afraid so."

"In that case," I observed, "he had better remain here for the present, for his pulse seems feverish, and I doubt whether it would

be wise to move him. You may rest assured, my friend, that we will take every care of him ; and as you seem interested in his welfare, you can come here to-morrow."

"You are very kind, Sir," said the man, hesitatingly ; "and perhaps it is for the best that he has fallen into your hands. There is a mystery about that child, Sir—a strange story which, perhaps, you would hardly believe ; but it is true, and I have proofs of it, which I will bring you to-morrow, if you like."

A suspicion crossed my mind that this person was really the child's father, and might meditate abandoning him, now that he seemed to have met with a person who was likely to take care of him for the future. I looked steadily at the man, to watch if I could detect any confusion or hesitation in his manner, and said :

“Cannot you give me this information now?”

The mendicant returned my glance without shrinking from it in the least, and replied immediately:

“I can do so if you will; but I say again, the story is a strange one, and you would perhaps think I was imposing upon you if I had no proofs to show. I have seen better days, Sir, and know how people in your station look upon folks in mine. Here, you will say, is a lying tramp—one of the common rogues of London who wants to put off his brat upon me because he thinks I have too much country simplicity to detect his tricks. That’s the long and short of it, Sir; but if you want to hear the thing, of course I don’t object.”

There appeared so much sincerity in the man’s voice and manner that I was disposed to trust him. But I could not help asking

him how he had discovered that I came from the country.

“No offence, Sir, I hope,” said he, smiling; “but there is a twang in your talk that betrays you; and besides, I was close to you when you got into the hackney-coach and put up your boxes. I am one, Sir, you see, who don’t easily forget people.”

“But I do not remember you.”

“Very likely not, Sir. I have a knack of slipping from people’s memories. But now, what do you say? Shall I begin the story or not? I must warn you, however, it is a long one.”

I reflected for a few minutes, and resolved to defer all explanations till the next day. I wished to consult with my uncle, that I might explain what had transpired, and get his permission to send for a medical man. In spite, too, of the trust which I was dis-

posed to place in my new acquaintance, I was not exactly prepared either to speak to my uncle in his presence, or to leave him alone and unwatched in a house that did not belong to me. After all, it could not be proved that he was the child's father, for when I compared their features and appearance nothing could be more unlike than the two. Besides, the man was evidently ready to satisfy my curiosity at once if I wished it. He had come of his own accord into the house, and there seemed no reason why he should suddenly disappear. These and similar considerations passed rapidly through my mind, and I replied almost immediately :

“I think you had better call to-morrow, I shall be more at leisure then.”

“Well, Sir,” said the man, “as you will. One thing, however, I must tell you—and I am ready to swear to it if necessary—the

boy is none of mine, and his parents, I think, must have been respectable. Take care of him, Sir, take care of him, and God will reward you, if man can't."

He bowed to me in a manner that showed some acquaintance with the usages and customs of a better class of society; and after casting a glance towards the bed on which the boy still lay, apparently unconscious of what was going on around him, left the room and the house.

I immediately sent into the school for my uncle, and when he came, he found me watching by the side of my patient. I drew him into the corner of the room, and narrated hastily what had happened. My uncle shook his head.

"You don't know the tricks, George, of these London impostors, and of the hardened little villains whom they train up. Who can tell but this boy may be introduced here

to get himself acquainted with the house, in order that the father may carry off our plate at some future occasion ?”

“Nay,” said I, “he seems so gentle and good. Come and look at him.”

I took my uncle’s arm, and led him to the child’s bed-side. There he lay, with flushed features and closed eyes, scarcely breathing at all, and resembling, in the clear and regular outline, and rigid composure of his countenance, some statue of sleeping childhood carved by a master hand. My uncle at first surveyed him with that careless and indifferent glance which we usually bestow upon a mere stranger, but by and bye there appeared to be something in the child’s features that rivetted his attention, and excited some powerful emotion in his mind. He approached closer to the boy, and bending down his head, gazed long and anxiously upon the uncon-

scious countenance. During this scrutiny, he murmured once or twice, in a scarcely audible tone :

“ Like—very—like. Her very features. Perhaps—yet no, it cannot be.”

“ Like whom ?” inquired I, in astonishment.

“ A dream—a vision !” still pursued my uncle, as if only partially aware of my question. “ But for *her* sake, I must do something for him. George, we must send for a doctor, and at once, for even my little skill in medicine tells me that his services will be needed.”

There was no time for mutual explanations, and I did not therefore ask the meaning of the mysterious words which I had heard. Even at another and more leisure period, I should have hesitated before endeavouring to penetrate into what might possibly be a painful secret, but now there

was no opportunity for conversation. I went myself for the doctor, and brought him back with me.

The boy had revived somewhat during my absence; and after feeling his pulse and prescribing for him a composing draught, the medical man gave orders that he should not be disturbed; but said, at the same time, that there was no danger, and that the patient would probably be much better on the morrow.

“And now, George,” said my uncle, when the doctor had taken his departure, “go and pay your visit to Mr. Monçada. I am not wanted particularly in school, and will look after our young patient. Stay, you may bring me my Hecuba before you go. You will find it on the third shelf of the library, next to Polybius.”

I executed this little commission, and then proceeded to the house of Mr. Monçada,

which I succeeded in discovering without much difficulty. I found him reclining on a sofa, in a small room tastefully furnished in the Oriental style. The walls of this apartment were covered with Arabesque ornaments, and hung with pictures representing Old Testament histories and the scenery of the Holy Land, while two gilded pastilles, resting on silver candelabra, copied from antique models, were diffusing an agreeable fragrance, which reminded their owner, perhaps, of the perfumes of the East. On the window-sill were placed some vases from Pompeii, and the whole of the arrangements gave evidence that a spirit of refined luxury had presided over their details.

“You must not attribute all this Orientalism to me,” said Mr. Monçada, as he rose and extended his hand. “This is my daughter’s boudoir, and her fancies have been allowed their full range in her own

peculiar domain. Still, these little memorials of the land of my fathers are not displeasing even to me."

"I can well imagine it," was my reply; "for were I of Hebrew race, nothing would please me more than keeping ever alive the associations connected with that holy country whence my ancestors emigrated, and to which I should then hope that my children might return."

"That hope, I fear," said Mr. Monçada, "is but coldly cherished among us. Many of our people are now so accustomed to the lands of their exile that they would ask nothing better than to renounce their nationality and become English or French politically, while they remained Hebrews only in religion."

"And you, then, do not sympathize, Sir, with their feelings on this subject," said I.

“No,” replied Mr. Monçada, with a slight sarcasm in his tone, “I have yet to learn that the descendants of Moses and Solomon ought to consider themselves honoured by being allowed to share the position of those whose highest vaunt can only be, that a Norman plunderer or Danish pirate of the eleventh century was the founder of their family. You must forgive my Jewish pride, Mr. Singleton, but I feel as I speak—strongly on this point.”

“It is commonly believed among us,” I observed, “that the Hebrew genealogies no longer exist.”

“Our public registers are indeed destroyed,” he replied, “but with an Oriental race, tradition supplies many points of information which the Westerns never feel sure about, except they can be proved by written documents. For instance, we believe that every one who bears the name of Cohen,

which in Hebrew, I need not tell you, signifies a priest, is indeed a descendant from Aaron, and as such, entitled to certain privileges in our Synagogue Ritual. But here comes my daughter, to whom I must now introduce you."

I raised my eyes and beheld a beautiful girl of nineteen, in whom the features of her father were softened and refined by feminine grace and loveliness.

There was the same high, intellectual forehead, but in her its expanse was clear and unwrinkled as the marble brow of a Grecian statue, she had the same arched eyebrows, but with an outline more delicately rounded off. The expression of her dark, lustrous eyes was thoughtful, almost melancholy, and seemed peculiarly suitable to the daughter of an exiled and persecuted race. Her English birth, and the bracing air of the North, had given to her features a ruddy

tint, blended slightly, however, with the deeper hue of the East.

Curling masses of dark brown hair fell in luxurious profusion around a neck, which for its clear and snowy whiteness might have been justly likened by one of her country's poets to "a tower of ivory." Her dress was composed of the most costly materials, and although a fastidious or simple taste might have censured the abundance of her glittering and jewelled ornaments, yet their elegance could not be disputed, and the beholder might even see in their excess, a memorial of her connection with a race almost proverbial for their intense love of personal decoration.

Drawing one of the richly embroidered cushions to her father's side, she sat down at his feet and looked upwards to him with a glance in which fondness and affection were mingled with reverence and filial pride.

My past habits and studious tastes had rarely hitherto brought me much in contact with female society. I never encountered without a considerable amount of bashful confusion, even the rosy-cheeked and good-natured country damsels who dropped in occasionally to have a neighbourly chat with my mother, and though I wondered at my own timidity behind their backs, yet in their presence all my confidence vanished, my speech was stammering, and my words few. It may well be imagined, therefore, that I felt awkward and abashed before such a specimen of female loveliness, adorned and heightened by magnificent and tasteful attire. I longed to please, to say something amusing and entertaining, but my memory failed me, and suitable phrases would not come. I was too ambitious to create a favourable impression to be content with mere commonplaces, and too inexperienced to succeed in

bringing out those elegant trifles, the skilful utterance of which in female society, marks more than anything else the finished and accomplished man of the world. I tried literature, the best resource of the bashful scholar, but timidity made me pedantic ; I referred to several obscure occurrences in Roman history, analyzed the Greek metres, and finally detected myself asking Miss Monçada what she thought of the last edition of Gesenius's Hebrew Lexicon.

The time flew rapidly on as we conversed about subjects that were mutually interesting, and when I rose to take my departure I found that my visit had occupied more than three hours. Yet I readily enough resumed my seat when Mr. Monçada begged me to listen to a little air from his daughter before I went. Without any hoydenish excuses or feigned hesitation, she took her guitar, and chanted one of those fine old Hebrew hymns which still

recall to the minds of a wandering and exiled race, the splendours of the temple worship and the poetical customs of their long-lost land.

When I returned to my uncle's, I found a letter from the Secretary of the Missionary Society, stating that the reports he had received having been satisfactory, I could be admitted into the college the latter end of the following month. My first impression was to wish my admission had been postponed a little longer, but I chid myself for the weakness of which I was now for the first time sensible. What was Miss Monçada to me? what could I ever be to her beyond a passing acquaintance? Yet her tones seemed to linger in my ears, and her form would rise before my eyes. She exercised a strange fascination over me, a fascination to which I had hitherto been a stranger, and which I strove to the utmost

of my power to put from me. She and her father were, I thought, unbelievers in that blessed faith in which I had placed all my confidence and all my hopes. But then there flashed across me the possibility of their becoming Christians, and was it not my duty at least to attempt their conversion? I could not begin my Missionary career better, than by bringing two of the ancient people to the fold of that Messiah whom their fathers had rejected and despised. But again the idea seemed so visionary that I was angry with myself for entertaining it, and I resolved to subdue the selfish hope which I felt was mingled with my desire for their conversion.

Yet when I met my uncle at supper, I could not help asking him whether Mr. Monçada had ever expressed any sentiments favourable to Christianity.

“Why,” he said, “we have never fully entered into that subject, but he has been rather inquisitive on one or two points, and professes great respect for some of our institutions. I remember, too, when our church was built, he sent us fifty pounds which was very handsome.

“You think, then, he has no positive ill-will towards our religion?”

“No, certainly; in fact, if I recollect right, he did more than many Christians on that occasion. We applied to Sir Magog Bawl, the great Church Reformer, and *he* refused to give us sixpence on principle, but wrote us a long letter in the papers the next day, abusing the bishops. By the way, talking of the Church, reminds me that our clergyman is coming in to-morrow to dine with us.”

“I shall be glad to meet him,” said I.

“He must have a very heavy and responsible duty here, if I may judge from the aspect of your district.”

“And,” observed my uncle, “he does the most that a man with a large family and six pupils of eighteen can, which of course is not much ; but then, you see, his stipend is only a hundred and twenty pounds a-year, so that we must make allowances.”

“But why does he take pupils ?” I asked.

“He can’t starve,” said my uncle, “which he most certainly would if he didn’t. A single man in London would find some difficulty in living on this income, much more a family of eight people.”

“Talking of pupils, reminds me that I have not inquired after our young friend upstairs.”

“Thank God, he is doing well !” said my uncle. “I have left him now in the hands of my housekeeper, with whom, by-the-bye,

I have had a sad battle on his account. She thought, at first, that we had been allowing ourselves to be imposed upon; but when she saw his pale, delicate face, and heard he had no mother, her woman's heart gave way. It is the property of that sex to take to children, as you may learn by Dido's carriage towards Ascanius in the *Æneid*."

The next morning, the child was much better, and the doctor even permitted him to sit up a little. He was profuse in his expressions of gratitude, but when I spoke of his recovery, he grew pensive, and seemed sorrowful.

"Why," said I, "you do not appear very pleased that you are getting well! Come, cheer up, you will soon be able to run about as usual."

"Yes, Sir; but I wished to die."

"To die, child! What can have put that in your head?" said I, rather gravely.

“Because here, Sir, I have no mother and no home. They told me that my mother died, and was living in a glorious place far away, and I want to go to her.”

“Well,” said I, “you shall tell me all about that some other time when you are stronger. But on one point, you may make your mind easy. If you are a good boy, you shall stay here after you get well.”

The boy seemed pleased with this assurance, and I soon after left him. As I was going away, I asked him his name?

“They called me Jack, Sir.”

“Who are *they*?”

“Mr. Martin and aunt, Sir. I called her aunt, but she wasn’t my aunt, though they were very kind to me, and I cried very much when she died.”

This conversation reminded me of the mendicant, who had not yet made his ap-

pearance according to promise. It seemed rather suspicious; but after all, that was not the boy's fault, and I determined that I ought not to visit the sins of his protector on him. I had a presentiment that the Martin he had spoken of, was the person in question, but in his present weak state I did not like to tease the child with inquiries.

"Let him get better," I thought to myself, "and then we shall soon see of what metal he is made."

When I went out for my daily walk, I found that I had left my stick at Mr. Monçada's, and called there to ask for it. The servant begged me to walk in while she searched for the missing article; and nothing loth, I allowed myself to be ushered into the little Eastern boudoir, where I discovered Miss Monçada alone.

She had recently been busily engaged, as it appeared, in reading a small volume in

Hebrew characters, which lay on the table before her.

“You will think me very learned, Mr. Singleton,” she said, observing me glancing at the book, “but from my childhood I have looked with veneration on our holy language ; and I never ceased teasing my father until he allowed me to learn it. The wild, poetic legends of the Talmud have since been a favourite study with me.”

“This is not, I think, the Talmud,” said I, taking up the volume, and reading from the title-page : “This is entitled, ‘Toldoth Yesu.’”

“Yes,” she said “the generation of Jesus ; and it is about this, that I wish to ask you a few questions. You are not, perhaps, aware that my father belongs to a small, but daily increasing body among our people, who repudiate many of the Rabbinical traditions, and do not share the general hostility

towards Jesus of Nazareth. His cousin, however, who belongs to the other party, has had frequent discussions with him, and reproaches him severely for what he terms his latitudinarian opinions. He has just sent him this book filled with what I believe to be the grossest calumnies against the founder of Christianity, whom we consider to have been a great and good man, though we do not like you, admit his divinity and equality with the Almighty and ever one Jehovah."

Miss Monçada then entered into some particulars respecting the book which she had been reading, that I need not recapitulate here. The work in question is little known to the generality of Christians, and is by no means common among the Jews. It excited, however, a great stir in the sixteenth century, when its falsehoods were exposed and refuted by the celebrated Reuchlin.

“I have long desired,” she said, in conclusion, “to peruse the Life of Jesus, of which I know some portions only. As the descendant of our ancient kings, I have often felt a species of veneration for Him, and I must own that our Talmud legends amuse my fancy more than they enlighten my reason or touch my heart.”

“If,” said I, drawing from my pocket the New Testament that I generally carried about with me, “if you would accept this, you will find in its pages what you require.”

“I am obliged to you,” she said smiling. “I will at least borrow it, and, provided my father makes no objection, read it too. But, to change the subject, I hear, Mr. Singleton that you have lighted on a youthful squire, or perhaps, I should rather say, page. Is he to attend you on your travels, and share in your future adventures. The old knights

I am so fond of, had generally an attendant of that sort, you know."

"He is a poor orphan child," said I, seriously, "one of the friendless creatures who are, I fear, too common in this great Babylon."

"I always pity an orphan so much," said Miss Monçada; "it is such a sad thing to have no mother! Ah! I can sympathise with them in that," she repeated thoughtfully, "for mine died before I knew her." She paused for a few moments, and her lips moved as in prayer. Afterwards she continued in a more lively tone: "But who knows, Mr. Singleton, that your *protégé* may not turn out some day a great man. I am sure he will be a scholar if your uncle takes him under his care. Among us, a wealthy person frequently adopts a poor youth, whom perhaps he lights upon by chance, educates him at his own expense, and

not unfrequently the person so educated marries into his patron's family. My father had some such thoughts with regard to a youth of rare genius and uncommon acquirements, whom he encountered accidentally a few years ago."

"But I hope — that is, I suppose," I stammered, "that he has not—I mean, that he did not carry out his design?"

She coloured slightly as she replied :

"I believe he has no intention of that kind now, yet Jacob Hyams was certainly very dear to him."

Mr. Monçada entered, and I shortly after took my leave. As I walked home, I could not help feeling angry with myself for the anxiety which I had so awkwardly concealed with respect to the young Jew, and for the growing attachment to Miss Monçada, of which I was becoming more and more

conscious. Prudence seemed to suggest, indeed, that I should tear myself at once from the society of one whom I could not deny that I was beginning to love; but a feeling that I was able and should be able to subdue and bridle my passion, seemed to oppose itself to advice which I could not but esteem most painful.

“Happily,” I thought to myself, “she dreams not of this; she cannot imagine, and she never shall, that the poor Missionary student has aspired to think of loving one so beautiful and so accomplished. Let me but get well through my task, let me be the humble instrument in God’s hand of weaning her from those errors which she already seems likely to abandon, and then I can bid her farewell for ever, hoping that I shall assuredly meet her once again in a region where love will be purified from its earthly grossness, and a more hallowed and refined

affection will no longer look forward with dread to a parting hour."

When I came down to dinner I found my uncle engaged in conversation with a clergyman, whom he introduced to me as Mr. Mainwaring, the Perpetual Curate of the district. As we sat at table, the conversation turned chiefly upon the condition of the poor in the metropolitan parishes.

"It is, indeed," observed Mr. Mainwaring, "a frightful contest which we have to wage with the ignorance and irreligion of an immense mass of human beings brought up under the very shadow of our national Christianity, yet positive heathens or atheists in their ideas and lives. I fear that neither our numbers nor our organization are at present such as may lead us to entertain hopes of victory."

"That is an evil, though, which Church

extension will in some measure meet," said my uncle.

"Not entirely," replied Mr. Mainwaring. "To build a church is one thing, to induce people to come to it another. Besides, what can you anticipate from the efforts of clergymen, many of whom are obliged to toil hard for their daily bread, and who draw the least possible provision for their support from those altars, by which according to the Apostle they ought to live? Can you expect a man whose mind has been worn out by five or six hours' hard reading with pupils, to go forth fresh and vigorous to his work, to study closely the manners and feelings of those to whom he must address himself, and to accommodate his teaching and his advice successfully to their humbler capacities?"

"But some clergymen have means, inde-

pendent of their profession," suggested my uncle.

"There are a few such," replied Mr. Mainwaring, "and to the honour of our cloth it may be also said that they are active, hard-working men, who devote unsparingly their time, money and talents to the great cause. But consider that there are also those who find themselves driven to callings which, though not abstractedly wrong, are incompatible with that charge which ought to engross not a part only of a man's time and energies, but his undivided attention. Besides, remember that the pursuits of a scholar not unfrequently produce a species of mental fastidiousness in the man whose chief office is to preach to the poor, and to make his home almost in their humble dwellings."

"There is undoubtedly something wrong

in some quarter," said my uncle; "but where would you fix the blame?"

"It is difficult to say, as long as all parties concur in nothing but in the attempt to shift the responsibility off their own shoulders," replied the clergyman. "We are perpetually told that our Church is well paid for educating the people, when we know that the great majority of her working clergy are in the habit of receiving wages, which a butler in a respectable family would reject with disdain. I ran my eye this morning over the columns of a Church paper, and found at least a dozen advertisements for curates, each advertiser offering the liberal stipend of eighty pounds a year. And then reflect upon the unfairness of committing to one or two men, as is often done, the spiritual charge of four, five, or ten thousand souls. He must be indeed a

clerical Hercules who could grapple with such a many-headed Hydra."

"The division of parishes is greatly required," said my uncle.

"Yes, but mark the inconsistency of our opponents," replied Mr. Mainwaring. "Whenever we attempt any step towards the reformation of abuses, we are sure to run our heads against some interested party or other. 'Clerical ambition,' cries one; 'infringement of long-established rights,' shouts another. This Church reformer wants to abolish pew-rents in district churches, and thus take from their already ill-paid incumbents the means of subsistence; that would have no more places of worship erected until he has plundered the bishops of their property, and reduced them to what he calls the apostolic simplicity of a horse and gig."

"And in the meanwhile," said I, "we are suffering the seeds to ripen which may

hereafter produce a harvest of infidelity and rebellion. The masses are silent now, by and bye, perhaps, they will speak to us in a voice of thunder, and make us repent when too late that we have neglected to keep pace with the exigencies of the times."

"Yet," said my uncle, "let us be thankful that much has been done, and is doing. The great mass of churchmen are becoming more and more awake to their duties and responsibilities, and even those defects in church organisation of which our friend speaks, are already beginning to feel the influence of a pressure from without. All I fear is, that if the clergy and their friends do not take matters of this kind in hand very soon, those who are unfriendly to the Church may, and in that case we shall have spoliation instead of reform."

"God forbid that should ever be the case!" said Mr. Mainwaring, fervently. "In

spite of her faults, faults which a true friend would rather judiciously amend than falsely and flatteringly conceal, she is a noble Church, a Church that has bravely and manfully fulfilled her mission, and will fulfil it yet more bravely and manfully if her enemies and false friends do not fetter and paralyse her energies. I never think of her, but I am reminded of some brave old oak that has weathered out the storms of countless winters, but which is daily growing weaker and weaker as the ivy twines around it with its destructive embrace. Remove the weed, and let the staunch old tree have fair play, and you will still preserve it for many years in health and vigour ; neglect it, and it dies."

The next morning a letter was put into my hands which the post had just brought. I glanced at the direction, but although written in a plain and legible hand, the

writing was unknown to me. Its contents were as follows :

“ Sir,

“ You will be surprised that I did not keep my appointment to-day, but there are people looking after me that I do not care to meet, so pray excuse me. I will manage to see you soon somehow ; but in the meantime I hope you will not turn poor Jack adrift. His mother was a lady who lodged with my good woman in better times, when I could walk about the streets without being afraid of anybody, which I cannot now, more shame for me. I do not know what right I have to ask you to take care of this boy ; but if a scamp, like me, has taken care of him for twelve years for the love of one that's gone, I think a good Christian like you will help him for the love of God. Pray excuse my saying this

Sir, but I hope to show you some day that I am not so bad as I may seem to some people.

“Your humble servant,

“JOHN MARTIN.”

There was a strange mixture of bluntness and real feeling in this epistle which rather pleased me. At all events it seemed as if the man's story were not altogether a made up tale, and I determined to compare what he had written to me, with the boy's own account of himself. In a few days, Jack, as we called him, had entirely recovered from his illness, and I took an early opportunity of talking to him on the subject of his past history. He had become now so used to my society, that he exhibited neither reserve nor timidity in conversing with me, and therefore proceeded at once to give me the following account of himself.

“The first thing that I remember was living with Mrs. Martin in a garret near St. Giles’. She was very kind to me, and I used to call her aunt, though she always said she was no kin to me. She told me that my poor mother was dead, but that perhaps my father might come some day, and take me home in a fine carriage to a large house, where I should have fine clothes and a great many servants to wait on me. I was always looking out for him, but he never came, though I used to think of him and poor mother who was gone to the good place whenever I was by myself. That was often enough, for Mrs. Martin was frequently out, and I seldom saw Mr. Martin. There was one friend I had—the old black cat that used to sit before the fire and purr whenever I talked to him, which I did very often, because you know, Sir, I had nobody else to talk to.

“One day poor aunt was took very ill,

and could not get out of her bed. The doctor came to see her, but he wasn't so kind as the doctor that was here with me, and he told her in a cross voice that her illness was all her own fault, because she would go out washing when she wasn't fit for it. Aunt began to cry when he was gone, and then the clergyman came, and she told me she should die and go to where my poor mother was. I often thought I should like to ask her to get mother to come back, and take care of me but I didn't, because I supposed it might be wrong to say so. Then she got worse, and one day she did not speak to me, and her hand was so cold. And I trembled, I don't know why, and began crying. The neighbours heard me, and came up, and they told me she was dead, and then I cried still more. After three or four days a man in black came and nailed her up in a long box, and

gave black cloaks to me and Mr. Martin. We followed her to the old church-yard, where there was a hole dug, and they let the box down into it. Then Mr. Martin and me cried again very much, and we went back, and he took hold of my hand, and said: ‘Well, Jack, my boy, never mind; I’ll take care of you for the sake of her that’s gone.’ And he did take care of me, Sir, but he never would let me go out with him, because he said it wasn’t fit, though he was very kind. So I used to sit at home, and think of my father, and every coach that came down the street, I fancied it was he, and used to run to the window to see if it would stop at our door.

“At last Mr. Martin didn’t come for a week, and the woman down stairs said he was in trouble, so she turned me out, and I came up here and slept near the brick kilns, and the people passing by gave me

ha'-pence, and sometimes I got a horse to hold ; but I was often very hungry, and once I had nothing to eat at all the whole day. The boys often wanted me to beg, and do other bad things, but I thought of my mother, and how it would grieve her if I was wicked ; and I was afraid too, that my father would be ashamed of me when he came back, and so I didn't do like them. But I said I would go and slide with them if they liked ; so I went, and it was then that you pulled me out of the water."

The boy's simple narrative increased my interest in him, and somewhat allayed the suspicions which I had formed in respect to the mendicant. My uncle shared warmly all my favourable feelings towards our new *protégé*, but he never alluded in the slightest degree to the words which he had formerly let fall, and which, owing to his

habitual absence of mind, he was scarcely aware had been noticed. I felt that it was not for me to solicit a confidence which he did not spontaneously offer, and though I sometimes grew curious, and desirous of unravelling his secret, yet upon the whole I thought it better to leave the chance of its discovery to time and fortuitous circumstances.

CHAPTER VI.

It was now time for me to leave Wolverton House, which I did with some regret, for my uncle's kindness had much endeared him to me. Jack, too, looked very mournful at my departure, though I promised to see him as often as I could, and assured him that he would be well taken care of.

There was another house where I had been a constant visitor of late, that I looked at as long as it was visible from the cab-window, and for whose inmates I breathed

an internal prayer when I could see it no more. My reflections were rather of a melancholy character, and I speedily sank into a reverie, which lasted till the vehicle stopped at the gate of the Missionary College of ——.

I was rather disappointed with its appearance. Mr. Templeton loved to enlarge upon the Gothic piles and cloistered quadrangles of Oxford, and his eye brightened up with enthusiasm when he spoke of the commanding aspect of his Alma Mater. I now saw before me a long meaningless range of building, which might have served equally well for a carriage-bazaar or a cotton-warehouse. In front of the monotonous lines of square windows was a species of lawn enclosed on the three sides by brick walls, defended by fragments of broken glass-bottles.

When I entered, I found a number of

students amusing themselves at cricket. They were fresh, healthy-looking young men with strongly-marked English countenances, on which hard study seemed to have left no traces ; while, judging from the shouts of laughter which accompanied their game, they appeared to think that a little wholesome merriment was not inconsistent with the nature of their destined calling. As I stood regarding them, I could not help thinking of the vicissitudes which a few years would introduce among that joyous group. Some of them would perhaps have laid their bones in a foreign soil, while others would have returned broken in health and worn out by Missionary labours to the native land which they had quitted in the flower of their youth, and buoyant with the anticipation of a successful and useful career.

There is no position more disagreeable

than that in which a person is placed who comes suddenly into a group of strangers. My entrance soon directed towards me the looks of the whole assemblage, and for a few minutes I stood awkward and irresolute, not knowing which way to turn. At length a slender young man, very pale, and wearing spectacles, detached himself from the others and came up to me.

“ I presume,” he said, “ you are the new brother ?”

“ Yes,” I replied, “ my name is Singleton.”

“ And mine,” said my new acquaintance, “ is Matthews. Brother Singleton, I am glad to see you. This,” he continued, turning towards the group, “ is Mr. Packman, this, Mr. Slingsby, and that, Mr. Bridgman. The others you will get acquainted with by and bye.”

Brothers Packman, Slingsby, and Bridgman

having gone through the usual formula of stiff bows remained silent for some minutes. They then discussed the state of the weather, which seems to form the ordinary prelude to all English conversations, and having speedily exhausted this interesting topic we all remained regarding each other for a short time. Mr. Packman then began a story about Rowland Hill, at which he laughed excessively, and all except Mr. Matthews moulded their features into a smile. The latter gentleman, however, looked very grave and observed that such levity was most unbecoming.

“Brother Packman,” said he, turning to me, “has one fault, Mr. Singleton, which I am grieved to notice thus publicly, he is too much given to be funny.”

“Well,” said Packman, “and is it wicked to be funny?”

“Ah !” said Matthews, with a deep sigh.
“The crackling of thorns under a pot.”

“Come now, Matthews,” cried Bridgman, “you know who has said ‘that a merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance.’ Some of our friends, Mr. Singleton,” he continued, “appear to imagine that a religious man is bound to appear always gloomy. I trust I am as averse as any one can be to unseasonable or outrageous mirth, but to be cheerful is certainly not contrary to any precepts of the Gospel with which I am acquainted.”

Mr. Matthews showed his dissent from this last opinion by a deep sigh, and was about to speak when a young student came towards us from the college, and soon drew a little crowd around him.

“Well, Merton,” cried several voices at once, “what is the matter? What did the Principal want with you?”

“There is nothing particular,” was the reply, “only Mrs. Goodwin came to him, complaining that her conscience has been much pained by the sight of missionary students playing at cricket, and she has begged the Principal to put a stop to such recreations for the future.”

“Ah !” said Matthews, groaning, “I always said such a profane amusement would give offence.”

“But the Principal?” cried two or three, while a chorus of voices uttered in an under tone : “Stop our cricket—what a shame !”

“The Principal,” continued Merton, “remarked in reply, that missionary students had bodies as well as souls, and that one must be attended to as much as the other.”

“Three cheers for the Principal,” ejaculated Packman.

“Brother Packman, you are incorrigible,” groaned Mr. Matthews.

“The Principal has also begged me to request the new student to come to his room,” continued Merton; “and so if you please, Mr. Singleton, I will be your guide.”

As we walked side by side towards the college, I regarded my companion with some degree of curiosity, for which he was mainly indebted to the superiority which he seemed to exercise over the rest. He was a tall, athletic looking youth with strongly marked features that might have been called handsome, but for a certain air of austerity which appeared to pervade them. Short curling locks of coal-black hair clustered round an ample forehead, the prominence and height of which betokened intellect and ability, while the keen dark eyes sparkled with vivacity and intelligence.

We found the Principal in his study, busily engaged at a small writing-table in reading or revising several sheets of manu-

script which lay scattered before him. Among these I thought I detected my own answers to the examiners, but I had little time for investigation, as the Principal hastily collecting his papers thrust them into a drawer in the table, and then turning himself in his chair fixed his eyes steadfastly on me.

He was a man of middle age, with a spare, delicate form, and pale countenance. His high intellectual forehead, and thinly scattered hairs gave to his general features a venerable and imposing aspect, rendered more striking by the keen penetrating glances which issued from his large grey eye, and seemed to discover in a moment the character of the person before him. His manner of speaking was distinct, melodious and slow, as that of one who weighed well the meaning of what he was going to utter before he committed himself to it. I could not help being reminded as I gazed upon him, of an old picture of

Francis Xavier, which Mr. Templeton had once shown me, and which was supposed to be an excellent likeness of that celebrated Missionary.

After some preliminary conversation, he asked me how I liked my new companions. There was nothing unnatural in the question itself and, perhaps, had it been put by another person, and at another time, I should hardly have thought twice about the answer. But when I looked up and caught the calm yet wary glances of that cold sagacious eye, which appeared to be on the watch lest even the minutest indication of character should escape them, I felt somewhat flurried, and could only stammer out that: "I had not yet had sufficient time to form any judgment respecting them."

"And yet," he replied, smiling blandly, "there are characters, Mr. Singleton, whom we may read at a glance."

I felt quite certain he was trying to read mine, and coloured slightly, although I said nothing.

“You must learn this art,” he continued, “it is most useful to a Missionary. And in the meantime, let me remind you that while here, obedience will be one of your chief duties. You must show that you can obey before you are fitted to direct. I am also anxious that from time to time you should submit to me your own feelings and impressions with regard to what goes on around you. There is much good may result from this both to yourself and others.”

“Mr. ——,” I replied, steadfastly eyeing him, “I am ready always to give a full account of myself, but I must decline at any time speaking of what may concern my companions.”

The Principal seemed slightly disconcerted, but recovering himself, he said briefly :

“I should hope, Mr. Singleton, my position and character will exonerate me from wishing or implying that private confidence should be broken. Still it is right that you should be aware that in an establishment of this kind, one student is or ought to be a check upon another, and it is still more fitting that one on whom so much responsibility rests should be intimately acquainted with the character, deportment, and feelings of those under his charge. But enough of this at present. You will soon, I trust, understand better what I mean; and now Mr. Merton will show you your apartment.”

He bowed rather stiffly, in return to my salutation, and there seemed a little pique in his tone and manner. As we passed along the corridor, Merton asked me to step into his room for a few minutes, and we were soon engaged in a comfortable *tête-à-tête* conversation. After a few preliminaries, my

companion asked me what I thought of the Principal.

“He seems rather stiff and formal,” I replied; “besides, I do not quite like the idea of acting as a spy upon the sayings and doings of others.”

“You must make allowances,” replied Merton, “for him and for all of us. We are brothers in name, but even among brothers in blood there are little differences, which the best regulated family discipline cannot always extinguish. In short, you will find that a Missionary College is not a scene of perfection. I trust, however, you have too much good sense to be scandalized at the discovery that human nature is liable to imperfections here as well as elsewhere.”

“True,” said I, “but I know that even in families much dissension is occasioned by favouritism and tale-bearing.”

“Well,” said my new friend, “I agree

with you in that, and I could wish that some of our brethren thought like me. Our good Principal loves authority, and wants, perhaps, more information about what goes on amongst us than many care to afford him. In a society like ours, there are of course some who have observed this, and act upon it more than many of us like. The Principal has been for some time engaged as a Missionary in India, where I should imagine discrimination of character to be a quality constantly called into action. He has thus become a sharp, quick observer, and likes to try his power on every one who comes across him. If I add to this that he has not a grain of imaginative enthusiasm, I think I have perfectly described him to you."

"I fear," said I, "that I have given him some offence."

"You need not tremble for the conse-

quences, if you have. Like most men of his character, he would speak more gently and give more little marks of favour to a person whom he could rule and manage, than to one who promises to be somewhat untractable. Yet I am not sure whether he does not respect you the more in secret for a little show of spirit, and though perhaps he may be a trifle less cordial for a day or so, yet you will find that he does not allow private feelings to influence his sense of justice. One thing, indeed, he will not easily pardon, and that is the slightest infringement of the College regulations, or even the least manifestation of indifference to them. And this reminds me that to-night is our weekly prayer-meeting, and as the bells will soon call us together, I had better show you your room at once."

I had scarcely finished arranging my things, when Merton tapped at my room

door, and offered to conduct me at once to the library, where the students were now assembling. It was a spacious apartment, lined with book-shelves, on which were arranged a large and valuable assortment of theological works. Over the fire-place I discerned a portrait of Swartz, in his long black Lutheran gown, while in the background were depicted the palm-trees and low hills of the region in which he laboured. I gazed with admiration on those mild and venerable features, while I thought of the laborious activity and steadfast integrity which had drawn from Hyder Ali that remarkable encomium, expressed in an official note that he addressed to the Indian Government: "Send me Swartz, the Missionary, to arrange our treaty, for he is the only European I know who speaks the truth."

In the centre of the apartment was a large round table, covered with green baize,

at the farther side of which one of the students seated himself, and then after a few minutes silent reflection all rose, and the Missionary Hymn of Bishop Heber was given out by the leader of the evening's devotion. That beautiful composition is too well known and appreciated to need either quotation or praise from me ; but I never felt so strongly the effect of its spirit-stirring strains, as when I heard them pealing forth from the lips of those who had consecrated their energies to the work of carrying out the object which the poetry so strikingly embodied. Stealing a glance at those around me, I perceived even the dullest countenance lighted up with enthusiasm, as with kindling eyes they uttered the last stanza.

“ Waft, waft, ye winds, his story,
And you, ye waters, roll,
Till like the sea of glory
It spreads from pole to pole !

Till o'er our ransom'd nature,
The Lamb for sinners slain,
Redeemer, King, Creator,
In bliss returns to reign !”

All the little peculiarities which I had noticed vanished at once from my mind, and I beheld around me only a band of brothers knit together by mutual love, and engaged in carrying out the noblest object for which man can either live or die.

The singing ceased, and the presiding student read a short sermon or essay upon a doctrinal subject, displaying great powers of reasoning, and a pleasing variety of illustration. When it was finished, he called upon Brother Matthews “to engage in prayer,” and we all knelt down.

It is not my purpose in a work of this nature to censure or to criticise the practice of extemporaneous prayer. Feeling as I do, that our admirable collects furnish the most copious supply of expressions wherein

to clothe the varied phases of Christian thought, and that they teach us better, perhaps, than any other manual how to approach the Eternal Throne with fervour purified and refined from coarse though well-meaning irreverence, I should most certainly prefer their use on every public occasion. Still, when Mr. Matthews poured forth the feelings and sensations of an honest mind, aspiring to praise and glorify its Creator, I could make allowance for a faulty phrase, or for an expression bordering on vulgar familiarity. But when in the course of his prayer, he proceeded to draw an exaggerated portrait of Brother Packman, to deplore his proneness to levity, and to ask forgiveness "for a member of this society, who had grievously sinned by unseasonable mirth," I felt that what was serious and well-intentioned, had degenerated into a species of religious caricature, and rose from my knees, lamenting and disappointed to

find that even in religion's innermost sanctuary, there remained so much of the bitter and ill-natured spirit of the outer world.

When the prayer was concluded, the assembly dispersed ; and I was making my way to my own room, rather dissatisfied with what I had lately heard, as Merton overtook me, and asked if he might sit for a few minutes by my fire.

"You seem vexed, Singleton," he remarked, as he closed the door ; "and I can well imagine the cause. Yet have you never learned that even the old philosophy could teach its votaries not only to bear, but what is more difficult still, to forbear?"

"I acknowledge," said I, "that I feel somewhat put out by observing that, even within these walls, ill-nature can assume the cloak of religious zeal."

"Yet is that wise or even fair?" he said. "The true Christian, as well as the true philosopher, must take men as he finds them,

and not be displeased if he discover a few jewels among a heap of questionable qualities, and almost obscured by them."

"Would you have me, then, blind to my neighbour's defects entirely?" inquired I, somewhat pettishly.

"In one sense, yes," he replied mildly, "or at least indulgent. At all events, I would warn you against unconsciously copying the evil you deplore."

"Explain your meaning more fully."

"Why what is it you are displeased at? Is it not that a friend of ours has taken too uncharitable a view of the character of another, and that in dwelling upon some fancied defect which has forced itself upon his observation, he has presumed to address himself to One who pierces the secrets of all hearts as though he individually had no frailties to grieve over, and no follies to deplore?"

"I believe, indeed, that you have expressed my feeling exactly," said I, "but

still I cannot see how this bears upon the question."

"In this way," he answered. "His pharasaical self-complacency has irritated you as much as the levity of the other grates upon his feelings, and both of you yielding to these antipathies, pass over those qualities in their object which might redeem the defect. Matthews, while contemplating Packman, forgets his diligence in study and piety, and sees in him only a light trifler, while you pass over the other's fervour and zeal, and consider only his want of charity."

"Do you mean to say then that Matthews is right?" I asked.

"No ; but I say that you and I are not his judges, and that while we have so much in ourselves to cure and to amend, we ought not to waste our time in observing too closely the conduct of others. Mutual forbearance, in fact, should be the law of those who seek to exemplify in their conduct the dictates of

true philosophy and the maxims of sound Christianity. But I fear I am transgressing my own rule. You will forgive me, Singleton?" And he held out his hand.

"Most assuredly," I answered; "and thank you cordially for your excellent advice."

From that evening we were intimate friends, and almost exclusive companions.

Merton had been born and bred in the country, and possessed all the tastes and capabilities of a rustic for athletic exercises and pastimes demanding physical strength. His favourite, almost his only, amusement was rowing on a small river in the neighbourhood, and I believe he would have been very glad if the statutes of the College had allowed of horsemanship. With the majority of the students, he possessed little in common, for they had been mostly inhabitants of towns, and neither understood nor relished the pursuits of rural life. Like most habi-

tual dwellers in cities belonging to the middle classes, their piety was liable, at times, to become morbid, or even fanatical. There was something narrow-minded in their views, and a want of that refinement which dwells rather in the soul than in the dress or external manners. It is a certain purity of sentiment which shrinks from anything mean or essentially vulgar, though it neither affects polished phrases, nor is grieved by the discovery that its coat is not of the newest mode. It might be called the uniform of the true gentleman, for it marks at once the class to which he belongs, however obscured he may be by poverty, and however we may confound him, at first sight, with the ordinary crowd.

In everything he did or said, Merton showed this innate good-breeding which the dancing-master cannot teach, and which, in fact, proceeds only from a profound comprehension and practical realization of that

golden rule : "Do unto others as you would have them do to you." If a student required a little assistance, Merton was always at hand to give it. He seemed to know everything, was rarely at a loss, and yet never put forward his knowledge ostentatiously. It was only by a chance conversation, which he held in my presence with a Missionary recently returned from China, that I discovered his acquaintance with the language and literature of the Celestial Empire. In class, he never tried to press before another, and carefully avoided all unnecessary display.

Time rolled on, but brought with it little to remember and less to record. I visited my uncle from time to time, and was pleased to hear good reports of the progress of my little *protégé* Jack. He had been much noticed by Mr. Mainwaring, and was prepared by him for the ensuing confirmation. My uncle soon gave up his school, and

finding his time hang heavily upon his hands, devoted his entire attention to Jack's education.

I had called upon Mr. Monçada, and was somewhat chagrined to hear from the servant that he and his daughter had left town, and were going to remain six months at Brighton. However, I determined to apply myself manfully to my work, and endeavour to forget one whose image seemed constantly to recur to me. If I read of Queen Dido, or mused over Horace's description of Lalage, my mind would wander to Rachel Monçada, and connect her in some way with the subject of my studies. Earnestly, too, did I pray that her mind might be enlightened, and her reason convinced by the inspired volume which I had left in her hands.

There is something so pure and hallowing in the love which is tempered and moderated by religion, that I cannot but feel astonished it should so seldom have

been described by those who have sought to depict that passion in its various stages. It is still more surprising that any one pretending to rational piety should shrink from avowing his subjection in past days to emotions that are perhaps among the most unselfish we ever experience. Who can read Milton's beautiful description of the love of Adam while yet in a state of innocence, for the God-selected partner of his felicity, without feeling that there is a moral elevation in virtuous affections which ennobles and dignifies the being in whom it dwells. And how sweet is the thought that Christian love is not bounded in its passionate yearnings by the narrow limits of this short and troubled life, but that its vista extends beyond the grave, and loses itself in the dim shadows of an immeasurable eternity !

CHAPTER IX.

ONE evening, when Merton and I returned from our usual evening walk, I found Mr. Ranson, my uncle's old assistant, waiting for me in my room.

As I had rather a partiality for the little man, I shook him warmly by the hand, and invited him to take a seat. He looked about with a satisfied air, and complimented me on my comfortable quarters. I asked him in return whether he had found another situation, and what he had been doing since he left my uncle?

“Allow me to observe,” he said, in his

usual ceremonious way, "allow me to observe, Mr. Singleton, that I have been doing nothing."

"I am sorry for it," I replied.

"Pardon me," he returned, "Mr. Singleton, if I cannot reciprocate your sorrow. I have, if I may be allowed the expression, become a gentleman."

"Become a gentleman?" I repeated.

"Yes, Sir," said Mr. Ranson, "I trust there is no impropriety in the term, Sir. I have every right to the title, for I have at present no professional engagements. I am luxuriating, Sir, upon a little property lately bequeathed to me, and have now I trust abandoned dictionaries and spelling-books for ever."

I hastened to congratulate Mr. Ranson on his good-fortune, and asked him how he intended to occupy his leisure for the future?

“ Why, Mr. Singleton,” he replied, “ I believe I may confide to you and to this gentleman, who, I presume, is a friend of yours, and therefore worthy of trust likewise, that I have lately discovered there is much poetry in my nature which has hitherto lain dormant, and which, Sir,” he added, striking his forehead vehemently, “ must and shall come out.”

“ Indeed,” said I.

“ Yes, Sir,” he continued, “ I know it is there, I feel persuaded of that.”

“ Then bring it out,” said I.

“ Yes, Mr. Singleton,” he replied, with a desperate simplicity, which showed how much he was in earnest, “ but it won’t come. I have tried every means, as you shall hear. When I became convinced of the poetical yearnings in my mind, I sought, as was natural, the influence of rural scenery. I took lodgings, Sir, at Kentish Town ; and

my married sister, who is a vastly clever woman, and keeps an album, told me I must then infallibly succeed."

"And what effect had your residence upon your verses?" inquired Merton, with an assumption of gravity which was very tempting to my risible faculties.

"Very little, I must confess," said Mr. Ranson. "My first idea was to write something about nature, like Darwin's 'Garden,' or Pope's 'Pastorals.' I spent hours in rambling about the most rural parts of Hampstead Heath and Highgate Hill, but not an image suggested itself. I had read somewhere that a poet ought to contemplate nature. I am sure I contemplated it enough, for I stared intensely at every furze-bush and every quick-set hedge that came in my way, till I almost knew every leaf by heart; but nothing came of it. They would not be anything but furze-bushes and hedges, and so I gave it up."

“ You should have tried some other subject,” said I.

“ So I did,” he replied. “ I happened to stumble upon a volume of Crabbe, and admired it very much. In my cogitations I remarked to myself :—here is a simple subject ; what can be more simple ? A parish workhouse and paupers—what can be more easy ? And so I determined to get admission into the workhouse and study character.”

“ And you went to the workhouse ?” observed Merton.

“ I did,” said Mr. Ranson. “ I spent a whole day there, and I am afraid bored everybody to death by my inquisitiveness. I filled my note-book with the private biographies of the paupers. Unfortunately they every one resembled the other so much, and were in general so ‘ stale, flat, and unprofitable,’ that I could not for the life of me extract

anything striking out of them. All the men had been honest upright hardworking individuals, but singularly unfortunate. All the women were the victims of bad husbands, and ungrateful children. I found that they had been doing nothing but eating, drinking, and sleeping all their lives, and in short I could not discover one original pauper among the whole set. I sat for about an hour turning over in my mind what they had told me, biting my pen, and looking at my paper, but I could get no farther than :

“One Richard Jones that blacked his master’s shoes.”

“And what do you intend to turn your attention to now?” I inquired.

“Well,” said Mr. Ranson, “I have come to the conclusion that these humble everyday scenes require great powers in order to invest them with anything like interest. For poets of humble capacities it is necessary that the subject should meet the author as

it were half way, and bring with it a certain amount of the romantic and picturesque. Eastern scenery and manners are very striking, and so I mean to select an Eastern subject."

"But you have never been in the East," said I.

"No, I admit that ; but then permit me to observe that there are constantly being exhibited panoramas of Constantinople, Syria, and all these places. I shall study the country and people from them ; and there is this advantage in my plan, that as they always select the best scenes, one has them all pat and ready to one's hand ; whereas you know if I went there myself, I might just happen to overlook them, and fall into raptures with some insignificant place that nobody would care about."

"There is something in that," said Merton.

"Yes," said Mr. Ranson, complacently, "I

flatter myself that my idea is strictly original. And then, you know, I am collecting a vocabulary of those nice Eastern words that hitch into rhyme so prettily such as Peri, Bulbul, Gul, and so on."

"Well," said I, "Mr. Ranson, I heartily wish you success in your poetical undertaking, and I trust that this time the muse will not be niggardly in her inspirations."

"Thank you," he replied. "But I see that it is getting late, and I must not detain you from your studies. By the way, I met Mr. Monçada yesterday, and I think they are expecting a visit from you. Good evening. I hope when we meet again I shall have something to show you."

"I am afraid," said I to Merton, as the door closed upon Mr. Ranson, "that our friend has very little of the *vis poetica* in his composition. It is almost a pity that he persists in a pursuit for which he is so little fitted."

“He might select a worse one,” said Merton. “Why should we quarrel with a harmless hallucination that makes at least one person happy? Do you remember the passage which we were reading yesterday in ‘Horace,’ about the man who daily deluded himself into the idea that he was sitting in the theatre, and listening to the verses of the Athenian tragedians? The poet tells us, that when his friends had cured his monomania, he did not thank them for their pains. There are worse occupations in this world, than writing bad poetry.”

“And better,” said I.

“True,” he replied; “but as the world is constituted at present, we must be thankful sometimes if men can be kept merely from doing wrong.”

The next day, after our usual lectures were finished, I strolled into the workshop, where the students sometimes amused themselves with carpentering. I was busily engaged in

making a stool for my desk, when Matthews entered, and asked me "how I could waste my time in that way."

"Why, what would you have me do?" I inquired.

"Ah! Brother Singleton," he said, "you might be employed in meditation, or in reading good books. I am afraid you do not estimate rightly the value of these precious hours, during which we obtain a respite from carnal studies."

"And I fear, Matthews," I replied, "that you slight those studies which are training and preparing us for the work in which we shall have soon to engage."

"I do not mean to condemn them, for they have been prescribed by our superiors," said Mathews, "but for myself I am a man of one book."

"I have no wish to censure your adherence to that," I returned; "but surely you

will allow that the writings of men, held in reverence by all ages for their genuine feeling and truthfulness, have a beneficial effect upon the mind."

"But I do not allow it, my brother," said Matthews, energetically; "and I am afraid that if I had my own way, I should put all your favourites into the fire."

"Why," said I, smiling, "you are as bad as Pope Gregory the Great, who is said to have seriously entertained the idea of anticipating your intended good offices to Horace and Virgil."

"And I respect him for it," said Matthews, enthusiastically. "I dare say I am very bigoted; but I cannot see what advantages result to the minds of Christian youth from poems so licentious and abominable, that no author would, now-a-days, dare to publish them in the vernacular tongue."

"But let me remind you that they, also

contain moral sentiments, worthy of our warmest admiration."

"True, the sentiments of pagans and infidels," said Matthews, "sentiments, which although surprising, and perhaps commendable, as coming from men whom the light of truth had never visited, are of little use to us who are permitted to bask freely in its beams."

"You would then confine every one to religious books alone," said I.

"I would have them be consistent," he replied, "and ground their philosophy upon their religion, and not merely drag in the Gospel occasionally, and with a patronising air, to support their philosophy. That seems to be the great fault of the patrons of literature in this and every other age. But I see you consider me a barbarian, Brother Singleton, and, therefore, I shall leave you to your hammering and sawing, while I go and read the Proverbs."

“You had better read the book of Ecclesiastes,” said I, “and meditate over the passage which tells us that ‘there is a time for everything.’”

There was little intercourse between myself and that small knot of students who looked up to Matthews as a pattern and guide. While I respected their zeal, and believed their devotion to be sincere, I was dissatisfied with the coarseness of their ideas, and a certain vulgarity of deportment which they affected. I observed too that they studied with negligence, and with evident disrelish; while they seemed to include in their contemptuous estimate of profane literature, even those writers upon theological subjects who were in the slightest degree elaborate and refined. They appeared, in fact, to have taken for their motto the ridiculous fallacy that “ignorance is the mother of devotion,” and to act upon it with the most perti-

nacious obstinacy. Yet, most of these youths displayed, in their after career, much more energy and activity than many of their contemporaries, who had entered with greater zest into their studies.

There was, indeed, a rough earnestness about their character which led them directly to the point, while others were beating about the bush ; and the indomitable perseverance which they always exhibited when they really had an object which they cared for in view, frequently excited my admiration, and drew me towards them. But I found an alliance was impossible. They would not be satisfied unless I adopted, not merely their pious and devotional habits and practices, but their little weaknesses and sectarian foibles, which I could endure willingly in others, but which I could not without hypocrisy practise myself. While they talked loudly about the right of private judgment, they suffered no one to entertain,

even upon the merest trifles, an opinion contrary to their own; and while they professedly rejected all traditions, they zealously upheld the notions of some favourite preacher as the orthodox standard of interpretation.

There was another class of students with whom I might have sympathized more, had I not considered them rather too frigid and formal in their ideas. They were decorous and exemplary, it is true; they read hard and came well out of their examinations; but their religion seemed more the effect of professional than of individual feeling. The least enthusiasm alarmed and distressed them; fanaticism was their *bête noir*, and they always looked as if they had made with themselves an inward compact to die rather than betray the slightest emotion.

I often wished that I could have found the excellences of these two classes blended

together by a third party; but as this was not the case, and I had not felt inclined to connect myself with either, I was soon lightly esteemed by both. If Matthews invited a few friends to join him in a ramble or an excursion, I always found myself excluded. If Packman assembled a party in his room, and convulsed them with witty anecdotes about Rowland Hill and other facetious worthies, I seldom shared in their mirth. Merton, indeed, was always ready to give me his company; but as he was reading for ordination, he had but little time. It was, therefore, with considerable satisfaction that I had heard from Mr. Ranson of Mr. Monçada's return to town, and I resolved to pay him a visit on the following day.

In the course of my walk, I saw standing at the corner of a street, a man dressed in a parti-coloured costume of black and yellow, holding in his hand a board, on

which were depicted rudely enough several scenes illustrative of a convict's life in the penal colonies. His odd appearance arrested my steps for a moment, and attracted my attention. There was something in his features which seemed familiar to me; but it appeared so unlikely I could ever have seen him before, that I at once walked on. I had hardly proceeded a few yards before I heard footsteps behind me, and on turning perceived the object of my curiosity. The man looked at me in a knowing way, and thrusting a small paper into my hand, made a low bow and said, "Thank ye, Sir," as he turned once more to address a small crowd of workmen and butcher-boys, who had been following at his heels.

I judged it best to get out of sight before I examined the paper that had been thus delivered to me. It appeared to be one of the ordinary sort of catch-penny productions

commonly hawked about the streets of London, and professed to give an account of the writer's life and adventures as a convict in New South Wales. As I was turning over the leaves, a card dropped from between them, on which was rudely scrawled : " 8 Crocket's Lane, St. Giles's. Please come at 2 o'clock in the day." Such an invitation excited my curiosity, and I returned to the place where I had first seen the man who had given the paper into my hand, but he was no longer there. I carefully put up the address, and determined to repair to the place specified. At first some suspicions crossed my mind as to the intentions of the writer ; but I reflected that if he meant me any ill, it was not likely that he should select the daytime for the perpetration of either theft or violence, and I thought that possibly the desired interview might have reference to my little *protégé* Jack.

I found Miss Monçada alone in her

little Oriental boudoir. She thanked me very much for the loan of the New Testament, and said that she had been reading it with great attention.

“There is something so truly sublime,” she continued, “in self-sacrifice, that it does, indeed, appear to my mind almost divine. I can understand the hero who despises life in the excitement and rapture of conflict. He feels sure of his country’s approbation, and looks forward to a future of undying fame. I can comprehend, woman as I am, the self-devotion of many a martyr belonging to our ancient race, who has gladly yielded up his breath rather than basely surrender the truths which he believed, at the bidding of an earthly tyrant. But voluntary self-sacrifice, there is something so unhuman about that, it seems an idea too grand for mere humanity to conceive—too pure to have entered the worldly mind of a mere impostor.”

Miss Monçada uttered these concluding words in a low tone, and seemed scarcely conscious of my presence. All at once, she raised her eyes, and fixing them upon me, said impressively :

“ You are not deceiving me? You are not yourself deceived? These books are really what they profess to be, the records of that ancient time? Yet why should I doubt? You I cannot believe capable of attempting to convert me to what you yourself secretly discredited and— But my mind seems vacillating! I can scarcely tell what I believe now! Do you know, Mr. Singleton, I almost wish you had never lent me that New Testament?”

“ We may hope,” I said, “ not to be led into error if we search aright.”

“ Yes, but that search is so painful; and then the uprooting of all early habits, the discarding of old thoughts, the mind changed of a sudden from calm to confusion, as I

remember to have seen in Italy the still placid waters of a quiet lake swelling up into huge waves, and tossing the frail barks upon them hither and thither. And then the thought that wise and holy men have held our views, and that we, perhaps, are tearing ourselves from their fellowship both in this world and the next, it is a fearful soul-agony to go through with."

I was about to reply, when Mr. Monçada entered the room. His countenance was thoughtful and perplexed, and there seemed a slight impatience in his manner as he told his daughter to go and execute some trifling commission for him in the neighbourhood. We talked for a little time on indifferent topics, but he appeared to answer mechanically, as if his mind was pondering over some other subject, and debating how he might best introduce it. At length, he said abruptly, while his keen eye seemed penetrating my very soul:

“So you lent my daughter a New Testament, Mr. Singleton?”

“She was anxious to see one, Sir,” I replied, “and I was not aware that you entertained any objection.”

“I have not hitherto,” he answered, “expressed myself as if I had, and so far I fully acquit you, of course, from any underhanded dealing in this manner. Rachel has always been accustomed to follow my example of reading everything that comes in her way, and I own I did not expect that she would take up the subject so warmly. Still, though I have never professed myself a bigoted adherent to our creed, all right-thinking men believe a change of religion to be a serious matter ; and the possibility of my daughter’s becoming a Christian does seem to involve much that is painful and perplexing.”

I endeavoured to lead him by degrees to the differences between the two religions, and

found him more open to conviction than I could have supposed. He was evidently no stranger to the arguments which had been brought forward in times past by learned Christians, and seemed partially to admit their force. After an hour's conversation, he said :

“There is much in what you have urged with which I can most cordially agree. But to a man of mature age, transition from the feelings and hopes of childhood to another system of belief is no easy task. Moreover, the character of a convert now-a-days, shares almost something of the opprobrium which attaches itself to that of an apostate. Men of the world suspect and despise him who suddenly changes his opinions, old friends and connexions stand aloof, and a thousand ties of kindred and affection are severed in a moment, which perhaps can never again be united.”

“But it is our duty to sacrifice all for truth,” I said.

“I admit that. But the mind whose convictions have been formed and settled for years, can rarely be brought to behold so clearly the prominent features of that which is presented to us as true. It will always have its suspicions and its doubts, and even the early superstitions which it has outlived, and can smile at on ordinary occasions, possess their quota of influence now.”

“But with regard to Miss Monçada,” I observed, hesitatingly, “I trust you will not put a stop to her inquiries?”

“Perhaps I would if I could,” he replied. “But there is a certain stage in the feelings, when prohibitions only add zest to disobedience. I would not expose Rachel to even the chance of this, or endanger the stability of an affection and confidence that have never yet been interrupted.”

“I fear,” I stammered, “my visits here in future will be—”

“As welcome as ever,” he interrupted,

with a cordial smile. "Joshua Monçada is not the man to shut his door upon the nephew of an old friend for expressing his honest convictions. Only, as you are rather young to be a spiritual director, you will in future avoid, I hope, any private conversation with my daughter."

I had turned round to examine a vase on the chimney-piece, and I felt a confused sensation that my face was just then very red. However, I gave Mr. Monçada the promise he desired; and although, when I went out, I saw Rachel on the other side of the way, and would have given the world to have spoken to her, I subdued the inclination and passed on.

When I reflected on what had passed, I felt that I had much cause for gratitude; and though I cannot deny that in my heartfelt wishes and prayers for Miss Monçada's conversion, there mingled a more human and perhaps more selfish feeling; yet I struggled

against it as much as possible, and even endeavoured to persuade myself that the interest which I entertained for her was not, in the slightest degree, akin to love. But do what I would, the human sentiment was getting the better of me, and I resolved, if possible, to turn my thoughts into some other channel.

“It is not for me,” I reflected, “who have devoted myself to a holy cause, and to a self-denying career, to waste my time and energies in illusions as fond, and perhaps as baseless, as the day visions of a romantic school-girl. The stern business of life and the service of God need no dreamers, and frown upon the suggestions of an indolent and self-pleasing imagination.”

But though I, at first, determined to face the foe boldly, and to dispute the ground inch by inch, I was soon thankful to take refuge in flight. Well says one of our old divines: “There are some temptations to

which we must show a clean pair of heels." It happened fortunately, however, that I was passing my uncle's door, when the second thoughts flashed across me, and I gladly availed myself of the opportunity of dissipating my reveries by half an hour's conversation with him.

It was a quaint old house in which he had taken up his new quarters, and presented a striking contrast to Wolverton Academy. The latter was a tall, square, utilitarian sort of building, every part of which seemed to have been constructed by rule. Each nook and corner had been made serviceable, and it was one of those open and unreserved dwellings that you can see through at a glance. Square and rigid in its aspect, it seemed to banish all poetical associations and to set mystery at defiance. You felt, as you hurried through the chambers, that you might very well mistake one for the other, they were so much alike. The most super-

stitious imagination could not have conjured up a ghost there, or imagined a distressed and persecuted heroine pouring forth her sorrows beneath the shade of those upright window-frames. In short, it was the stern and practical, though unpleasing Actual, embodied in bricks and mortar.

Far otherwise was my uncle's new residence. It was situated at the end of a pleasant lane, leading from a road lined with stately brick houses, that had almost already converted the quiet suburb into a part of the great metropolis. It looked so fresh, that rustic lane with its green hedges and unpaved path, that it seemed, when compared with the stiff, formal road, like one of those sweet and momentary illusions which sometimes flash across the current of our every-day thoughts, cheering and enlivening the monotony and dullness of many a life-journey.

There was a small garden in front leading to the old-fashioned porch, which contained two benches, where the inmate

might sit, inhaling the odour of his flowers, and contemplating the outer world. The cottage, for it had been originally no more, was so altered by the additions which successive owners had made, that its original occupant would hardly have recognised it. I soon found myself involved in a labyrinth of passages, which might have perplexed Dædalus himself; and had not Jack made his appearance very opportunely to guide me through the intricacies, I should hardly have discovered the study, where I found my uncle, surrounded by dusty folios and the clouds of smoke which issued from the ample bowl of his meerschaum.

“You see I have taken to smoking, George,” said he, after the first salutations. “It is a German habit. Ah, they are a wonderful people, the Germans. Real students—the only men in the world that can turn out a Greek play respectably.”

“Well, uncle,” I said, “and how does leisure suit you?”

“Admirably,” he said. “I feel as if I had thrown aside thirty years at least, and were commencing my studies anew. Ah, if you only knew the luxury of immersing oneself head and shoulders into that glorious old classical literature, after having been accustomed to retail it bit by bit to a set of thick-headed boys, who can get no further than dry etymologies and dull syntax rules. There seems such a freshness about what I read now, that I can scarcely believe I have been going over it every day of my life in school.”

“Still you have one pupil left,” I observed.

“Oh, you mean Jack. Yes,” said my uncle, musingly, “it is strange how that boy recalls features which I had almost deemed forgotten.”

He paused for a while, as if some painful thought had escaped his mind, and then said :

“There is no accounting for these re-

semblances; they are strange, very strange things."

"I suppose," I observed, not wishing to reply directly to his last remark, "we must soon find out some occupation for him."

"No," replied my uncle, "let him stay where he is, he is useful to me, and his countenance recalls one whom I loved as I shall never love again. The first time I saw him I remarked this, and it has since drawn me towards him, so that I do not think I should like to send him away. It must be fancy though, mere fancy. It could not be—"

He stopped abruptly, and as if he remarked my curious look, added :

"There are secrets, nephew, which we sometimes keep from our nearest and dearest. At some future time, perhaps, I may prevail upon myself to confide to you what I have hitherto guarded jealously from every human soul; but not now, not now."

My uncle continued silent and abstracted, as if he were struggling with some remembrance that arose out of what he had been saying ; and not wishing to intrude into thoughts which he evidently wished to conceal, I rose, and telling him it was time for me to return to the College, took my leave.

Before I quitted the cottage, however, I had a short interview with Jack, now a smart lad, with his manners and phraseology greatly improved. He told me that my uncle was devoting two hours a-day to his education, and seemed to like study very much. As I gazed upon his prepossessing exterior, I could not help contrasting it with the ragged, neglected state in which I had first discovered him ; and I thanked God earnestly and sincerely that He had made me the humble instrument of effecting such a change.

On my way home, I pondered over my uncle's mysterious allusions, but I could dis-

cover no clue to them in what I already knew of his history. That, indeed, was little enough, for he had spent the greater part of his early life abroad, during which time there was little intercourse between him and my mother. She had told me once that he was engaged while on the continent in tuition, and I was also aware that he possessed a little private property, which had been bequeathed to him by some continental friend ; but beyond these few and unimportant details, I was entirely ignorant of his past career. However, I was not desirous of prying into his secrets, and determined to wait patiently until he himself chose to reveal them.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE next day I remembered my extraordinary appointment in St. Giles's, and although Merton, to whom I mentioned the matter, endeavoured to dissuade me from keeping it, I resolved to go. I found considerable difficulty, however, in discovering the house of which I was in search. It was situated in a narrow lane, leading out of one of the by-streets in the neighbourhood of Tottenham Court Road. The dingy and discoloured window-panes were here and there patched up with pieces of brown paper, and would by themselves have been impenetrable to the eye of an Argus without the additional

concealment afforded by the dirty blinds which hung behind them. Below was a cellar, occupying what would have been in other residences the place of the kitchen, round the walls of which were suspended rows of second-hand boots, while from the inner recesses, obscure even in broad daylight, issued a mingled odour of fried fish and tobacco-smoke. At the side of this den, two or three broken steps led up to the door, which appeared to be in a better state of preservation than the rest of the edifice.

After giving several raps with the rusty knocker, a slatternly-looking woman, dressed in the remnants of what had once been finery, made her appearance, and in a cross tone asked me my business. When I told her that I wished to see one of her lodgers, she darted at me a suspicious look, and after scanning me from head to foot, said contemptuously :

“ I suppose you’re one of the City mis-

sioners ; but if so, you may take your tricks elsewhere. We want none of your cant and hypocrisy here."

"I am not a City missionary," I replied ; "I came here at the desire of one of your lodgers."

"And how do you know, young man," she answered, "that I lets lodgins ? It's like your imperence, knocking at a lady's private door in that way, without bein' able to say bo to a goose when it's opened to you. I s'pose the party as told you to come has got a name, hasn't he ?"

"I don't know his name," said I, rather confused, "but he wears a yellow and black dress, and goes about selling books."

"Well, I'm sure !" she replied, "you've a nice set of acquaintances, young man. Do you think I receive a parcel of Merry-Andrews into these respectable apartments—I that was waiting-lady for years to the great Alderman Gobble's daughter ? I can

tell you we take in no such trash here ; and if you want your friend, you had better go and look for him on front of one of the shows at Bartlemy fair.”

So saying, she was about to shut the door in my face, when a man’s voice exclaimed from inside : “ Hold your tongue, you jade, and let the gentleman come in—it’s all right, I tell you.”

The woman retired, grumbling ; and the last speaker continued, addressing me :

“ Come in, Sir, and look sharp about it, for we don’t want to keep our door open more than we can help. We like to be private, and are too bashful to expose ourselves to strangers.”

I entered at once, and followed the man into a dark and dirty room, smelling of spirits and tobacco, and containing no other furniture than a deal table and two broken-down chairs.

“ There,” said my guide, “ sit yourself

down, Sir. Carefully, if you please, for our furniture is rather rickety. We are sadly off for that article at present, as our upholsterer is out of town, and we can't conscientiously patronise another."

I looked up as he spoke, and at once recognised the man's features, though he had now discarded his parti-coloured costume of yesterday, and was dressed as a labourer.

"I see you know me," he observed, "though perhaps you'd hardly guess that this is the fourth time we've met. You remember the beggar that helped you with the drowning boy, and made an appointment which he did not keep—the old sailor you gave a penny to—and the poor blind man with his dog and fiddle, on whom you bestowed sixpence and a sermon the other day? I see you do. Well, it's very singular, isn't it? but I was all these."

"Indeed," said I, "then I shall be more cautious in future."

“Ah ! young gentleman, you may try,” he replied, with a laugh, “but I shall come over you again, depend upon it. There’s not such a hand as I in the whole town.” And the man smiled complacently, as if he were as proud of his miserable powers of deception, as a diplomatist might be at overreaching one of his duller brethren.

“Well,” he continued, after a pause, “that’s neither here nor there, Mr. Singleton. I owe you something ; and I must own you gave me good advice, though I’m such a thorough-paced vagabond now, that it’s all thrown away. There was a time, perhaps, when it would have done me good ; but that’s past by many a long year.”

“It is never too late to repent,” I said.

“Yes,” said he, almost fiercely, “it is sometimes, as far as this world goes. Ask any of your benevolent Christians now, if they would so far believe my repentance, as to give me the lowest and most miserable

drudgery to do about their houses. No, Sir, when a man loses his character, it's all up with him, and he must go on sinking lower and lower, till at last he becomes so bad that there's nothing below him."

I was about to speak, but he interrupted me.

"We had better get to business, for I have but little time to spare. You see, Sir, there have been certain parties after me just now, about a transaction in which I certainly was not the most to blame. That has taken up my attention of late ; but I have been warned not to be seen in the suburbs, so I thought it would be better to see you here, and have made several attempts to communicate with you, but hitherto they have not succeeded. When I met you before, you had always a gentleman with you, and I did not like to speak as he was there. I did think of writing, but I imagined that perhaps the masters at the College

would open the letter, and that it might damage you. I know something of school dodges, for I was an usher myself once."

"Indeed," said I.

"Yes, and if I had my choice, I'd rather be what I am than become one again. But, as my old governor would have said, I'm digressing. We were speaking, you know, about Jack. I wrote you a letter once upon that subject."

"Then," said I, "you are not his father?"

"No, I'm not," he replied; "and it is about that I wish to speak. You see that, rogue as I am, I have some good about me, though not, perhaps, much to boast of. But my poor father was a respectable, honest man, and if I could save another honest man's son from coming to what I have come to, I shouldn't be sorry for it. I must tell you that when a youngster, in a mad fit, I married a servant-girl. My wife wasn't

genteel, of course, and my family got savage about it, and would not have anything to do with me. That was the first step in my downward road. Well, we worked on, poor Bess and I, trying to get up the ladder, and as regularly as possible falling down again. Among other things, we let lodgings, which might have answered if our lodgers had not all, one after another, gone off without paying their rent. My wife was good-natured, and would never dun anybody, and so we got cheated through thick and thin. I was then, as I told you, in a school, and could not keep a look-out upon them, though it would not have been much good if I had, for I was at that time as innocent of the world's tricks as a mere baby. Well, Sir, one evening a lady came in a hackney-coach to our house, and took two apartments for a month. In two or three days after she had been with us, this boy Jack was born, but his poor mother did not survive

the birth long, for she died in Bess's arms two days after, begging and praying her, as well as she could, to protect her boy. She also told her she was to write to some person, but my wife could not catch the name; and when the poor lady tried to repeat it, she went off suddenly and died. Bess, with all her faults, had a kind, womanly heart. She took to the little fellow, and he stayed with her till poor Bess herself was called away."

While he paused for a moment to repress the emotion which his recital had awakened in his own mind, I ruminated over the singular story he had related. At length, I said :

"But had you no clue to the lady's connections? Did she leave no letters or papers that might inform you who she was?"

"None, except what I'll show you presently. She knew only a few words of

English, and couldn't explain much even if she had wanted to. Besides, her time was so short, for, as I told you, she died a week after she came to our house."

"And she left no property?"

"A few pounds," he replied, "and her wedding-ring, which she took off her finger when she was dying, and said it was for her child. When we had paid the burial expenses, we had but little left, though we did not like to sell this."

He handed me, as he spoke, a small silver case, with a ring attached to it, by which it might be suspended from the neck. On pressing the clasp, it opened, and I drew forth a small scroll of parchment, on which were written some verses in French in a man's hand. They professed to be a prediction of the future fortunes of the person to whom they were addressed; and here and there were scattered astrological terms and allusions, used half in jest, yet conveying the

impression that the writer placed some faith in the science. When I had examined the paper, I was about to return it and the casket to my companion, but he told me to keep them.

“They may be of use some day in finding out the child’s father or family,” he replied, “and to me they are of little value. All I can do now is to leave the matter in your hands, and I am sure it will be well managed. Poor Bess liked the boy, and for her sake I am anxious to do what good I can for him. That you met with him in the streets was no fault of mine. I was just then in trouble—or, to speak plainly, in jail—and when I got out, I found that the old shark that kept the house had turned the boy adrift.”

I endeavoured to reason with him on the evils of his present course, and to get from him some promise of his amendment, but in vain.

“I am thankful for your kindness, Sir,” he said, in a more quiet tone than he had hitherto adopted, “but, at present, I must be what I am. I am not so bad as perhaps you think me; but, as I said before, I won’t boast. I am bad enough, that I own; and what’s more, I fear I shall be till I can get hold of an opportunity to be better. When you can show me a way wherein a man who has sunk so low as I have, may retrieve the past and live decently for the future, I may embrace it. Till then, I must continue what I am.”

“There are the colonies,” I suggested.

He shook his head.

“You well-to-do comfortable people think a man like me has no feelings, and can have no right to cling to the country he disgraces. Besides, in the colonies, there are ups and downs as well as here; and to tell you the truth, I have not been used lately to such hard work as would be necessary there.

But I will think on what you have said, and I will amend if I can."

"There is but One who can enable you to do that," I observed. "Shall I pray with you?"

"Pray for me if you will," he said; "but now I cannot bend the knee. It would be mockery, knowing, as I do, what I am, and that I do not repent as I should."

We continued some time conversing together; and in the course of that conversation, I drew from him many particulars respecting his past career. He had been, he admitted, a wild, roving boy, fond of adventure in any shape, and not particular as to the character of the peculiar excitement which offered itself. His mother dying when he was young, he had been mainly left to the tender mercies of a stepmother, who drove him out to seek for that kindness abroad which he did not find at home. Solitary, and yet yearning for companionship,

he had encountered Bessy. Even the most ignorant woman, if she is virtuous and good-natured, can afford sympathy; and from this sympathy sprang up a mutual attachment.

His mother-in-law and his father were indignant when they discovered it, for their pride was wounded—and there is no pride more easily ruffled, than that of those who belong to the lower sections of the middle class. Opposition, however, produced obstinacy on both sides; and when, at last, the young man married, his parents turned him out of doors. He was now left to shift for himself, and he struggled long and manfully to do it in an honest and reputable way. Had there been any kind friend to advise, or hold out a helping hand, he might have succeeded; but there was no one.

His parents persisted in their ill will; for though the father often showed signs

of relenting, the stepmother would not let him yield to the impulses of his own heart. Had the proper relations existed between pastor and flock, he might have gone to his parish minister with his little story, and obtained his advice and intercession. But his parish minister was unknown to him, and never visible except in church on Sundays, his whole time in the week being occupied by the large and flourishing school which formed his chief support, the maxim in England being that those "who serve the altar" shall not "live by it," but by something else.

Having always been fond of reading, he became an usher, but finding that he could only starve upon his allowance, his wife had taken a house with her savings, and let out portions of it to lodgers. Some of the lodgers never paid at all, and others paid so little that the speculation soon ended in ruin.

Finally, the young husband saw before his eyes a starving wife, and in his des-

peration went out into the streets to beg. His attempt was so successful that he resolved to go again, but having still some shame left, he determined to disguise himself. His adventurous spirit revelled in the different guises and characters which he was obliged to assume, and in the excitement which his new pursuit engendered, he forgot the criminality of it. It was, however, sorely against his wife's better principles, and she laboured day and night to add to their little store. A more selfish person might have sent the little foundling to the workhouse, but her woman's heart would never let her do that. Worn out by the hope of better days, which never seemed likely to be realized, she died broken-hearted, while her husband was in prison as a mendicant.

"I shall never forget what I felt, Mr. Singleton," he continued, hiding his face in his hands, "when I came to that room where we had so often been happy together.

I was struck down as it were, as if by a sudden blow, and I stood for a time stupid like, and did not hear a word of what the woman of the house was saying to me. You might have knocked me over with a feather, and what was worst of all, I could not help owning, Sir, that I deserved all this. And then I thought that I had brought woe and misery upon her, and that but for me and my wretched love, she would have been still alive and happy, perhaps the wife of some better man, with her children around her, a contented smiling woman, she that was now mouldering away in a pauper's grave. That was too much for me, Sir, and I threw myself upon the floor and sobbed like a child."

He paused for some moments, visibly moved by his own narrative, and then continued.

"Well, Mr. Singleton, it's no use grieving now over what can't be mended, I ought

rather to consider that which can. Poor Bessy ! she never liked my vagrant trade, and I will—yes, I will leave it. Thank you, Sir,” he said, seizing the hand which I had extended to him, “ thank you ; . I feel that with the thoughts and intentions of reform in my mind, I can shake hands once more with an honest man. Your visit has done me a world of good, and I can only wish that gentlemen like you would come more among us in this neighbourhood. You might do great things here. Good-bye, Sir, and remember that if you ever stand in need of any assistance which I can render, Jack Martin is not the man to forget the kind words which you have spoken to-day.”

Assuring him that I should not fail to repeat my visit, I left the house, taking with me the small silver case and the papers which it contained. My hope, however, that they would afford any clue to the discovery of Jack’s family, was very faint indeed. What more likely than that he was the child

of shame, abandoned like the too confiding mother to the tender mercies of a harsh and unfeeling world ; while the author of his being moved complacently in respectable circles, honoured by men and courted by women, heaving perhaps now and then a gentle sigh at the memory of what his conscience would only term the little peccadilloes of his youth, yet too indolent and too selfish to do anything in atonement for them. Or might not the mother after all be one of those thousand unfortunates, who deprived of their only support by the sudden death of a husband or father, sink into the abysses of misery quickly and silently, the dark waves closing over them, while they leave no trace of their existence in their small circle of acquaintances, who can only commiserate and deplore, but rarely assist.

In no country, perhaps, is there more misery, more real and heartfelt misery, among the middle classes of society, than in England. How many hundreds, whose ap-

pearance is respectable, and whose language implies a decent education, are suffering in secret all the pangs of the most abject poverty, or are haunted by the tormenting apprehension that a slight accident, or the most ordinary visitation of God's providence, may some day either render them unfit for those necessary exertions, whereby alone they can hope to support their families, or call them away by death from the side of their beloved ones, leaving these last uncared for and unprotected. There are societies in abundance for the poor, from which a ready tongue and a brazen face may generally obtain relief, and sometimes the means of vulgar debauchery, but there is none to aid those who cannot work, and are ashamed to beg. Yet the great social machine goes on from day to day like a Juggernaut car, cheered by the exultation of those who are mounting up towards its summit, yet heedless of the countless life-pilgrims whom it crushes hourly beneath its gigantic wheels.

CHAPTER IX.

WHEN I returned to the College, and was crossing the lawn, I came upon a small knot of students composed, amongst others, of Matthews and Packman ; the latter of whom, as soon as he saw me, exclaimed :

“Oh, Singleton, do you know we are going to have a grand day here, to-morrow. A Missionary is to be dismissed to his station, and we shall have a large concourse of people. It will be fine fun.”

“An occasion which it is a great privilege to witness,” said Matthews, in his usual lachrymose tone. “Brother Packman, don’t rub your hands together in that way.”

“Why not?” said Packman.

“Because it looks like levity. Dear me,” groaned Matthews, “it is near four, and I am to attend the funeral at a quarter past.”

“What funeral?” I inquired, “have you lost any relations then?”

“No, none exactly,” replied Matthews, “but I always like going to a funeral. It is such a solemnizing occasion, and puts one so in mind of one’s own end. Will you go with me, Brother Singleton? You will be much edified.”

“No, thank you,” I replied, as I continued my walk to the house.

I found every one in a state of bustle, and extraordinary activity. The servants were arranging seats and tables in the dining hall, while the music-master, or professor as he preferred being styled, surrounded by a little band of musical students, was practising hymn-tunes for the great occasion.

The next morning after breakfast, the lawn was crowded by ladies waiting for admission. As I looked out from my window I noticed a

slight sprinkling of gentlemen, a very slight one, for the sympathies of men are not so easily enlisted on behalf of religious meetings held in the daytime, and then their office engagements come in the way. Among the middle classes in England too, the religious concerns and engagements of the family chiefly devolve upon the wife and daughters. In nine cases out of ten she names the church or chapel where they shall attend, and her verdict upon the merits of the minister nearly always guides the opinions of the male portion of the family.

A very talented clergyman was a candidate for the pulpit of a certain popular chapel. He was a finished scholar, a clear logical and lucid reasoner, who felt too strongly the importance of the message which he had to deliver, to pay much attention to rhetorical embellishments. He delivered his sermon impressively, effectively, but the ladies were neutral. Another candidate from the sister isle followed on the succeeding Sunday. His discourse was nothing more than a series of platitudes dressed up in very flowery

language. He had ransacked the poets for fine sounding epithets, and he turned up his wristbands in a very enchanting manner. The ladies were all in his favour, "such language, such expression, such a style." The men remonstrated a little, murmured something about intelligibility, "common sense," and so forth ; but they were outvoted, and the flowery candidate gained the day.

And now the hall is filling, and grave-looking clergymen and laymen make their appearance from a sort of private door, and seat themselves around a long table, covered with green baize, which stands at the upper end of the apartment. The students have become, for the time being, lions of no mean order, and many a mother directs her little boy or girl's attention to the Missionaries in embryo, that are going to countries far away, of which they have read in Guy's "Geography." Then there is Mrs. Turgin, with her four younger daughters—the three elder have married Missionaries—and Mrs. Bezley, who has private

fancy sales for the Hindoos, and has sent to India many a package of pocket-handkerchiefs hemmed by her own hands. There, leaning upon his stick, is Mr. Pentington, who writes pamphlets on Missions, and little books for the —— Society, upon the strength of which he is considered by his acquaintance quite a literary character. There is also a thin gentleman in spectacles, who reports for a religious newspaper, and who looks steadily at the students, as if he were going to put us all down in print. And, occupying the centre of a semi-circular space, which has been reserved for him, sit the Missionary and his wife—a quiet, gentle-looking, German girl, who has left Fatherland and the romantic banks of her own native Rhine to lay her bones in that far-off heathen region. And as she glances round the assembly with a half-timid, yet serious eye—you may read in her aspect more heroism of a meek, unobtrusive kind, than would furnish out a dozen heroines by profession.

And now the Earl enters, and occupies the

Chair. After the prayer is ended, he makes a calm and sensible speech, intermingled with a few kind expressions to the Missionary and his bride, to which the former replies at more length.

He was a very ordinary-looking German, but he spoke from the heart, and therefore spoke well. It was true that a slight titter arose among some of the younger spectators when he talked of the natives being shaved instead of saved; but this was speedily repressed, and even the smilers grew serious when he alluded to his farewell visit to his native land, and spoke with that pathos which a German expresses so touchingly of the paternal region which was henceforth to see him no more.

The meeting over, the people prepare to depart; but many linger to exchange greetings with some of the students, and to inspect the College under their guidance. There are young and beautiful faces among them too, looking up to their conductors with a confiding

expression, that seemed to say, in the beautiful language of Holy Writ, "Whither thou goest, I will go; where thou dwellest, I will dwell; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."

The visitors depart, and the shades of evening are fast descending as I sit in my room, and muse upon the scene which I have just witnessed. Buried in my dreaming reverie, I seem to be sitting in the Missionary's place, with Rachel at my side. Vain dreams!—flattering illusions of youth!—how pleasing are ye while ye last! yet how often, alas! like the mirage of the Eastern desert, do ye vanish and disappear when we mistake shadows for realities!

My reverie was interrupted by Merton, who came to say that he wished me to accompany Packman, Matthews, and himself to a Missionary party that evening. It was a seasonable distraction from thoughts which, although pleasing, I almost feared to encourage; and so, hastily dressing myself, I joined the other three at the

College gate. As it was early, we determined to take a stroll before we repaired to the house of our intended entertainer, and it happened that we directed our steps towards a rather unfrequented part of the suburb, where a new road was being laid out. During our walk we fell into conversation about the Missionary and his wife, whose dismissal we had lately witnessed.

“He is a fine fellow,” said Packman ; “so earnest and self-denying. Do you know that he has abandoned very splendid prospects in Germany for his present career? One of the German students told me he held a valuable appointment at ——, where his influence and connections are first-rate.”

“He will never regret what he has done if he is a true man,” said Merton. “There is something in self-sacrifice that leads eventually to its own reward. Yet it strikes me that his wife is the more self-denying of the two. A man can rough it well enough, for he deals with the things of the external world ; and where his

heart and sympathies are equally engaged in a noble and glorious work, his occupation will of itself minister an excitement which will prevent his thoughts from dwelling upon his distant fatherland. But a woman, whose sphere is home, how much must she feel the wrench that tears her from all she has loved, the transplantation to a soil where all is strange and unknown, and where all her little ideal world has to be created anew."

"But," said Packman, "her self-denial can have but trifles for its object."

"Trifles!" exclaimed Merton. "But remember that it is harder to deny ourselves in trifles than in greater matters. Many a man, perhaps, who could walk to the stake with the sublimest enthusiasm, would feel dreadfully annoyed and put out if required to deprive himself of his daily walks or to give up his cup of tea."

"Absurd!" said Matthews.

"Try it, my good friend," said Merton, quietly, "and you will find that I am speaking

the truth. Our little comforts are despised generally because they are so common, and seem so much matters of course that we never can tell how dear they are till we are called upon to do without them. And this, I think, explains the reason why, in early Christian times, they laid so much stress on fasting and other corporeal discipline. The Christian Athlete was to exercise himself in petty conflicts with self before he ventured into the greater arena."

"Then," said I, "you think that some degree of training is necessary?"

"Unquestionably it is," he replied. "The man who has given sixpences in charity for a long time, will be ready to give pounds if needful; but you would vainly seek for a large donation from him who has never known the luxury of bestowing a little one."

Packman was about to reply, when we saw a horse coming towards us at a furious pace, accelerated by the cries of its rider, a young lady, who had evidently lost all command over the animal. As quick as thought Merton darted

off and after severe exertions, succeeded in stopping it, at no small peril to himself. We hastened to his assistance, and arrived just as the young lady was tendering him her acknowledgments for the service he had rendered. As we approached, she turned her face towards us, and I beheld the features of Rachel Monçada.

An awkward sense of my own tardiness and inactivity, almost prevented me from faltering out a few hurried words expressive of my happiness at her escape, while, to add to my confusion, Mr. Monçada rode up, and ascertaining that his daughter was not hurt, addressed his thanks to me as her deliverer.

"You are mistaken, papa," she said, blushing, "it is this gentleman," pointing to Merton, "whom I have to thank for my present safety."

There seemed a reproachful accent in her tone, and I fancied there was some coldness in her father's reply, as he said :

"Mr. Singleton's friend must forgive my error ; and I trust, Sir," he added, extending his hand to Merton, "we shall be better ac-

quainted. Mr. Singleton, I have no doubt, will bring you with him when he next does us the honour of a visit. And now, Rachel, we must change horses, and I trust my steady-going cob will not play you a similar trick."

With the aid of Merton, Mr. Monçada changed the saddles, and the former assisted Rachel to remount. As she received his courtesy, she blushed deeply and Mr. Monçada once more pressing Merton's hand, bowed somewhat formally, as I thought, to us, and rode off.

After their departure, Merton questioned me very closely about my friends, and seemed specially interested in Miss Monçada. An incipient pang of jealousy shot through my mind; but I stifled it as soon as I could, and briefly told him all I knew about them. He seemed silent and abstracted the rest of the way, and as I felt indisposed to speak, it was some relief when we reached the house to which we had been invited.

Its owner, Mr. Brambleberry, was one of the leading members of the Missionary Society,

and was anxious to be considered a species of Mæcenas to the students. He was a short, stout man with a pompous delivery, and rather fond of visibly patronizing those whom he honoured with his acquaintance. When we entered, the room was about half full of people basking in the genial smile with which their entertainer favoured them, as he stood with his back to the fire regarding the company. He nodded carelessly in answer to our profound bows.

“Some Mission students my friends, most promising young men. You will find seats yonder,” addressing us, “I am glad to see you, but you are eight minutes behind your time. I am sorry for it, for punctuality is such a gem in the Missionary character. Don’t say a word, I beg ; I dislike excuses. They encourage a habit of insincerity in youth, which must be avoided, particularly in those who have hereafter to write Missionary reports. And now, Jane, hand round the coffee and biscuits.”

While this process was going on, I looked

about at the company present. Nearly all the ladies were dressed in black, and most of them were the widows or mothers of Missionaries. They were mild, placid and retiring in their manners, and seemed deeply impressed with veneration for their host, who regarded them from time to time with the same bland expression of condescending good-nature, that might have animated a Roman Pro-consul of old, when inspecting an assemblage of docile and obedient tributaries.

The gentlemen were nearly all in black, with white cravats. Two or three were Missionaries, the others clerks, and an under secretary from the Mission-house, who looked dignified and official, in light trowsers, and a blue coat with brass buttons. As no one seemed exactly at their ease, the conversation flagged considerably, and the company divided themselves, as is usual in such cases, into little knots of two and three. Suddenly the host singled out a short gentleman, who had resided some time in China as a Missionary.

“Now, Mr. ——,” said he, in his most patronizing tone, “tell something for the amusement of the company.”

Mr. ——, a pale, nervous-looking man, stammered out a few sentences, expressive of his inability to comply with the request.

“Well, then, perhaps Mr. Flanigan will favour us,” said the entertainer.

“I would willingly do that thing, Sur,” replied the person referred to, a tall man with a strong Hibernian brogue and sarcastic look, “if I could relate what would be intelligible to *all* the good people here.”

“I think,” said the under secretary, addressing the host, “I think, Mr. Brambleberry, we are sadly deficient in the art of conversation in England, an art which, as the poet gracefully observes,

“‘*Emollit mores nec sinit esse feros,*’

that is, ladies, it softens the manners, nor suffers men to be brutal.”

The under secretary took a pinch of snuff,

as he said this, and looked round complacently, for he piqued himself upon his quotations, although some of his friends remarked that they happened generally to coincide with the examples of the Eton Latin Grammar.

“Ah! thin, and if it’s talking you want,” said the Irish Missionary, “it’s to ould Ireland you must come for that, I reckon. We have still, you see, a touch of the continent about us, and have not forgot the use of our tongues. And that reminds me of a little tale, which, if agreeable, I could tell ye just to pass the time away, if our host has no objection.”

There was a general burst of entreaty; and the Irish Missionary seeming by no means loth to respond to it, rose from his chair, and, to the astonishment and discomfiture of Mr. Brambleberry, occupied the post before the fire, which that gentleman had abandoned for a moment to give some necessary order. The host appeared, for a moment, astounded at his audacity, but quietly yielded to the usurpation—for there was something in Mr. Flanigan’s look that few men

would have cared to enter into conflict with. The latter paid no attention to the wrathful glance cast upon him, and after a slight pause, as if to recollect himself, began his story, which, as it needs no improvement from his accent and brogue, I have taken the liberty of divesting of that accompaniment.

“ You have all heard, doubtless, of the city of Tanjore. In ancient times, it formed the capital of a small principality in the Carnatic, and conferred upon its ruler the title of rajah or king. It is still a place of some importance in the eyes of the natives, particularly of the Christians, for it contains the tomb of Swartz, and in the court of the rajah’s palace still stands the statue of that great Missionary, carved by the master-hand of Chantrey. I was once stationed there, and I heard the story which I am going to relate from an old catechist who, when a boy, had gazed with veneration upon the German apostle, and received the precious lessons of heavenly wisdom from his aged lips. He was a fine old man was

Daniel, and I think I see him now, with his clean white turban and neatly-arranged cloth, as he used to sit, cross-legged, upon the matted floor of my house. I ought to say, perhaps, that he was a native poet of no small abilities, and rather superstitious—or perhaps we ought more charitably to term it, credulous—which, indeed, all the natives are ; but he was wonderfully pertinacious as to the truth of what I am about to relate.”

The Missionary paused awhile, and the under secretary ejaculated :

“ A most interesting old man, Mr. Flanigan, and one concerning whom we might say, considering his vocation, that he was

“ ‘ Nigroque simillima cygno,’

that is, ladies, ‘ most like to a black swan.’ I mean no disparagement, of course, though perhaps it is necessary for me to explain that the swan was, in ancient days, an emblem of poets, and the term is applied to the great Mantuan himself, the immortal Virgil, of

whom, doubtless, the ladies have heard. But I, beg pardon, I interrupt."

The Missionary proceeded, as if unconscious of the interruption :

"One evening old Daniel came to me to make his usual report. It was a sad and melancholy one, for the cholera had been marching through the town with its destructive step, and many of my little flock had to mourn the death of a husband or father. I felt as if some destroying angel were abroad charged with a mission of vengeance or chastisement, so unaccountable and variable was its progress, and so apparently resistless. The old catechist had been speaking of the downfall of Sennacherib and the ruin of his proud host, smitten in a moment by the stroke of a divine messenger."

"Do you think, Sir," he inquired, "that now, as then, the Almighty may not employ the agency of some invisible being to inflict these ravages upon mankind?"

"We know little of these matters, Daniel,"

I replied, "and therefore it is perhaps best not to speculate upon them. But you seem to have some object in asking this question."

"Did you ever hear, Padre," he inquired, not returning me a direct answer, "of the cause assigned by some of our people for the visitations of the cholera in these parts? You have not? Well, your reverence is fond of information about our opinions and legends, and I will, if you please, relate you one at present."

The old man drew forth his betel-box, and having helped himself to his usual luxury, began his tale.

"It was many years ago, when the Moham-medans had great power in the Carnatic, and the rajah ruled supreme in Tanjore, that a Brahmin of great influence and learning fixed his abode at that city. Men said he was of high descent, and in great favour with Hyder Ali, the Moslem Sultan of Mysore. He appeared to be wealthy and prosperous, though he dwelt much in solitude, and rarely consorted with the other members of his order. They

were not on the best of terms with him, for he came from the north, and was devoted to study, while the Brahmins of the place were sensual and ignorant. He seemed, however, to care little for their enmity, but perhaps thought it best to get as much out of their way as he could. So he built a house, the ruins of which are still to be seen, at a small distance from the town, where he shut himself up with his books. It was said that in this lonely abode he practised strange rites, and held communion with beings of no mortal race, reports at which the better educated smiled and the ignorant shuddered, but neither much cared to cross the path of the Brahmin Negonda.

“This man had scarcely fixed his residence in these parts for more than a year, when Father Swartz came to Tanjore to preach the Gospel. He soon rose into favour with the rajah, as of course you know from books, and, unlike many of our great men, he made that favour conducive to useful and beneficial purposes. Among his earlier converts was a wealthy mer-

chant named Sangam and his daughter Mootamal. She was considered one of the most beautiful of our maidens, and the poets compared her to the graceful lotus, our favourite flower. One day, as she and others were listening to the teaching of Swartz, the Brahmin Negonda happened to pass that way. He looked upon them with a contemptuous sneer, as they shrank from him almost in terror.

“ ‘Fools that you are,’ he said, ‘to be deceived by yon foreign dreamer, as if his tales were truer than your own. If you must be duped, it is scarcely worth while to go so far from home.’

“ ‘Man of dark studies, and I fear of dark deeds,’ said Swartz, ‘begone! and strive not to turn these simple ones away from the truth. He that believes a false system I can reason with, but it is more difficult to persuade him who credits nothing.’

“ ‘Nay, there are some things I can credit, Padre,’ replied the Brahmin. ‘I can believe in woman’s fickleness and man’s ignorant fanaticism. I know, too, that one of stern, determined

will can work his own pleasure with man or woman.'

" 'Not,' said the Missionary, ' while God lives and governs.'

" 'Say you so?' exclaimed Negonda, with a scornful laugh. 'Now, mark me, Padre. Within a year this flower of your flock shall be wedded to a heathen, and bow once more at the shrine of her country's gods.'

"He wrapped his robe round him and retired, while Swartz cautioned the girl and her father against the insidious arts of the proud blasphemer.

" 'Let him not commune with either of you,' he continued; 'force or abduction he cannot attempt, for my influence with the rajah and your own position would prevent that, but remember that a deceitful heart and a plausible tongue are more dangerous than even the cobra's venom.'

"Three months had passed away since this interview, and neither Sangam nor his daughter saw anything of the Brahmin, who continued apparently his usual pursuits. They began to

imagine that his boast had been the mere ebullition of momentary spleen or dislike, and that it was in no danger of being accomplished. Security makes people forget threatened perils, and often induces them to slacken in their watchfulness, and deride the idea of caution. Só Sangam thought no more of the Brahmin and his threats, and even ridiculed the notion of his daughter's ever being induced to marry a heathen.

“At the expiration, however, of the time mentioned, a young Hindoo named Sevagam arrived from Mysore. One of the first persons he visited was the merchant Sangam, and as he was of the same caste he was kindly received, the more especially when it was known that he was anxious to embrace Christianity.

“He was introduced to Swartz, and showed himself so well acquainted with the truths and doctrines of the Gospel, that the venerable man was satisfied of his sincerity. Still he could not obtain from him a direct promise to be

baptized. The new convert had always some excuse why the sacred rite should be deferred.

“In the meantime, he had made himself very acceptable to the old merchant Sangam, and at length solicited from him the hand of his daughter. He satisfied the family that his connections were respectable, and, in short, a day was fixed for the nuptials. A large party of the relatives assembled on that occasion, and the marriage contract was placed before the bridegroom for his signature. He hesitated, and a visible tremor shook his whole frame. Drawing the father aside, he asked him whether there was not a book that contained the law of the Christians in the house.

“‘There is,’ said the merchant; ‘it is one from which we read daily.’

“‘Allow me to take it away,’ said the new convert: ‘there is a passage which I must consult before I can sign.’

“Sangam thought the request a strange one, but he granted it.

“‘I will return in half-an-hour,’ said the young man. ‘Till then, amuse your guests.’

“The merchant felt uneasy, and resolved that he would go and consult with Father Swartz. The missionary handed him a small copy of the Sacred Volume, and said :

“‘Take this with you, and be sure it does not leave your house. In the meantime, I will engage in prayer for you. I suspect some evil, but God will protect His own.’

“The intended bridegroom returned in high spirits, and once more took up his pen. But again he seemed agitated, and exclaimed :

“‘There is a spell upon me : I cannot sign to-day.’

“This hesitation awakened the father’s suspicions, and he bade the stranger retire, saying that he must examine a little more into his conduct before he could bestow his daughter upon him. The young man departed, and took the road to Negonda’s house. One of the relations followed him secretly, and saw him

enter the door ; and when he returned, he found the merchant with Father Swartz.

“ ‘ I feel,’ said the Missionary, ‘ a presentiment that your daughter has been saved from a peril of some kind contrived by that bold, bad man. I must confront him, however, and his baffled confederate ; so which of you will show me the way to his house ?’

“ The relation who had tracked the false bridegroom, stepped forward boldly, while the others shrank back, and said :

“ ‘ By the help of the Lord, I will.’

“ ‘ Come on then, and fear nothing,’ said the Missionary, ‘ for as our own Luther sings, ‘ A strong tower is our God.’

“ They went together and met Negonda himself at the threshold.

“ ‘ Priest,’ he exclaimed, ‘ you have foiled me, thanks to the superstitious fool whom I have employed ; and now you come doubtless to triumph over a baffled man.’

“ ‘ I come not to triumph, but to entreat,’ said the good Missionary ; and he preached to him of

the love of Jesus, and begged him to trust in the Gospel. A long time did he reason and persuade, but it was in vain. The Brahmin heard him with an unmoved countenance, and a sullen scowling brow. He then addressed the Missionary in the Frank language, and as the companion understood a few words, he gleaned from his talk that he was one who had abandoned our Holy Faith, and was no Brahmin but a Frankish Infidel, who had adopted this dress to show his scorn of Jesus of Nazareth. He answered the affectionate remonstrances made to him, with blasphemies too fearful to repeat, and as he turned away to enter the house said in the Hindoo tongue :

“ ‘ You have your will now, but my hour will soon come.’

“ ‘ Unhappy man,’ said the Missionary, ‘ mark my words. Your hour is nearer than you think.’

“ That night a fearful storm swept over Tanjore. The thunder rolled and the lightning flashed, while many tall trees were laid

prostrate upon the earth. One of Father Swartz's servants was sleeping in the hall of his house, when he was awakened by a knocking at the outer door, and as he opened it a tall figure whose face he could not see glided past him.

“ ‘Where go you ?’ he inquired.

“ ‘To tell your master that my hour *has* come,’ said the intruder as he passed on towards the chamber of the Missionary. The man stood still, transfixed with terror, and when at length he stole up to his master's door he heard his voice uttering prayers in his own language. The next morning the Brahmin's house was discovered to be in ruins, as was supposed, from the effects of the storm on the preceding night, while beneath his own shattered roof lay his body still retaining on its pale lips the contemptuous expression which had characterized them during life.

“ Ever since that time the cholera has visited the neighbourhood, and the more superstitious people have a tradition that the spirit of the apostate Brahmin has been transformed into a

messenger of vengeance, and doomed for a certain time to wield the sword of the destroyer."

The narrator looked round. Most of the ladies were listening with fixed attention, although the host had for some time closed his eyes. He started up when the tale came to an end, and ejaculated:

"Mr. Swartz—ah! I've heard of him. Most respectable man—good Missionary. None such now-a-days."

"Rather marvellous, don't you think?" gasped the timid man, and then shrank back as if frightened at his own audacity.

"Well," said the narrator, good-humouredly, "I certainly was not present at the time, and I warned you that old Daniel had some of the qualities of a poet. His imagination was vivid, and I think he half-believed some of the legends he told me."

"It is, indeed," said the under secretary, "*monstrum horrendum*—no, I'm wrong—that won't do."

“It is very interesting,” said a pale, sentimental-looking lady. “I fear I shall not sleep after it.”

“I think we had better go in to supper,” suggested the host, who was anxious to resume once more his favourite place at the head of the table.

CHAPTER X.

ON the afternoon of the succeeding day, Merton reminded me that it would be but civil to call on Mr. Monçada. I could not help noticing that he had been bestowing more attention on his dress than was his general wont ; and perhaps this circumstance, and one or two little indications of an eagerness to be introduced to Miss Monçada, made me more silent than ordinary as we walked along. A sort of presentiment flashed across my mind that I had already a rival in the friend who had hitherto been my bosom companion, and the painfulness of this conviction was enhanced

by the peculiar position which I occupied with regard to both parties.

From what I knew of Merton's character, I was certain that the slightest hint would have been sufficient to have induced him to subdue feelings which, if indeed entertained, were of too short a continuance to make the sacrifice painful; but, on the other hand, I had no clear right to call upon him to relinquish them in my favour.

Deeply as I loved Rachel, I had never breathed a syllable to her or her father that could lead either to suspect that I entertained sentiments differing in aught from those of an ordinary acquaintance, and I felt that it would have been the most ridiculous vanity to suppose that her feelings towards me were of that nature which might encourage hope, and warrant me in appealing to the generosity of a rival. I determined, therefore, to watch the progress of events, and to be guided by the result of my observations.

"If she loves him and he loves her," I

thought to myself, "God forbid that I should be the barrier to their happiness!" Yet, at the same time, I felt that I might be deceiving myself, and anticipating a blow that would never fall.

Rachel had seldom looked so beautiful as she did to-day. She was sitting at her harp when we entered the room, and as she leaned over it in a thoughtful attitude, she might have been taken for one of the captive daughters of her own Eastern land meditating, on the banks of the Euphrates, over those strains of Zion which her lips were now forbidden to utter. As she rose to receive us, I noticed some constraint in her manner while addressing Merton, but to me she was exceedingly cordial; and leaving my companion to the care of her father, overwhelmed me with questions about Jack.

"Do you know, Mr. Singleton," she said, cheerfully, "he is quite a hero of romance, and perhaps, some day, will turn out the son of a great prince or lord, such as we read of in the old story-books. In fact, he is so poeti-

cal a personage that I shall almost be disposed to fall in love with him."

"I shall not tell him that," I replied, in the same tone; "it would unfit him for the adventurous career which such a hero ought to lead."

"Oh, no!" she answered, "it would be quite an encouragement. An adventurous knight would be nothing without a 'ladye love' to think upon when he was crossing some desert, or storming an enchanted castle."

"And pray, Miss Monçada," said I, "do you approve of that old-world practice of sending out an admirer to run the hazard of being thrust through with a lance?"

"You should not appeal to me on such a subject," she answered, "for I must own a foolish fondness for those ancient romantic notions. To me, woman never seems so much in her proper sphere as when she is the rewarder of brave and noble actions. The weakness of our sex, perhaps, makes us more ready to appreciate strength and valour in yours. She who is

doomed to seek in man a protector and a shield, must always be interested in those who seem most likely to afford the protection she requires."

I did not reply, for I thought her eye cast a furtive glance at my companion as she uttered the last words, and, for a moment only, a jealous pang disturbed and distressed me. I felt anxious to change the subject, and turned the conversation to the sentiments she had expressed at our last meeting. She told me that she had determined on embracing Christianity, and hoped her father would follow her example.

"To tell you the truth," she continued, "we have long thought over this subject, but until lately it has never occupied so prominent a place in our thoughts. I fear, however, that the change in our sentiments will produce a painful estrangement from the other members of my father's family, and particularly from his only brother, who is bigotedly attached to the old religion."

She had scarcely spoken, when the door opened and a gentleman entered the room in a travelling dress, one glance at whose features induced me to believe that he was the person of whom we had been speaking. Miss Monçada turned pale, and faltered out, "It is my uncle ; I trust he will be calm."

"We will retire," said I, making a movement towards the door.

"Do not let me disturb you, gentlemen," said the stranger, in an ironical tone, "you had better remain and witness the result of your machinations, which have cost me a brother, and gained you two converts to your upstart creed. Joshua Monçada," he continued, sternly, "am I to trust the letter which informs me that you are about to abandon the faith of your athers?"

"Such indeed is my intention," replied Mr. Monçada, calmly.

"Dare you avow it?" said his brother, passionately, "can you do so much violence to the ties of kindred as to renounce them for the shallow

sophistry of these fanatical priests? Then hear me: I give up, from this moment, all connexion with you; and may the curse of Him whom you have abandoned and despised cleave to you and yours for ever."

"Brother, brother," said Mr. Monçada, approaching him.

"Back, apostate!" almost yelled his infuriated relative. And as he spoke he pushed him rudely away.

The convert extended his hand quietly. "Judah," he said, "your creed, it seems, teaches you to curse; the first lesson mine inculcates is to forgive." The angry man recoiled from the offered hand; but better and softer emotions seemed to gain the mastery over him; he sank down in a chair, and burst into tears. I felt that it was no scene for strangers to witness' and with a mute adieu to Mr. and Miss Monçada we took our departure.

"*You* will often be called upon to witness something like this, Singleton," said Merton to me, as we were walking along.

“Perhaps so,” I replied. “But you seemed to lay a strong emphasis on the ‘you,’ as though these scenes were to fall to my exclusive lot.”

“I was thinking that possibly I shall not go out as a Missionary,” said Merton, musingly. “My uncle’s son died recently, and as he is a widower, and has no other children, he wishes me to remain at home with him. The leading men of the Society seem to think that, under all circumstances, I cannot do better than comply with his request. You sigh, surely you do not wish to stay in England.”

“No,” I replied, firmly, “not now.”

When we reached the end of the lane which led to my uncle’s house, I parted from my companion, and repaired to Erasmus Villa, as my relative chose to denominate his habitation. At the entrance I met Jack, who said he had a favour to ask me.

“Well,” said I, “what is it?”

“Why, Mr. Singleton,” replied the boy, hesitatingly, “I hope you won’t think it strange, but you know, Sir, you were the first person

that picked me up, and were kind to me, and I hear you are going away to foreign parts. So I thought, perhaps, that if you could take me, and I should be of use, perhaps, Sir, you would—”

“Take you, Jack,” said I, “but I am afraid you could not accompany me, and besides, you are well placed here, and my uncle is very kind to you.”

“Yes, Sir, but I am afraid,” he replied, “that I don’t suit him. He looks at me sometimes in a strange way, as if he was displeased, and now and then he speaks quick and sharp like, and once he told me to go away when I was reading to him. I thought he appeared vexed about something.”

“Oh,” said I, “that is all fancy. My uncle, like all of us, has odd ways occasionally, Jack, but you must not mind a little eccentricity.”

“But please, Sir,” he said, “I should like to see the world.”

“Ah! take care of that wish, Jack,” said I, “or it may get you into trouble. Remember

the story of the Prodigal son, that I used to tell you. He wanted to see the world, and saw it to his cost, but was glad enough after all, to return to the father's home, which in days of comfort and happiness he had thought weary and monotonous."

"But I have no father, Sir," said the boy, sadly, "I wish I had, for I do not think I should want to go out into the world then. Mr. Martin wrote to me the other day to tell me that he was not my father, and that nobody knew who was."

"And what is Mr. Martin doing?" I inquired.

"He says he is going to keep a small shop," he replied, "somewhere out by the river Lea, for he wants to get as far from his old place as possible."

"Well," said I, "perhaps I shall see him soon; and now, Jack, I must go into the study."

I found my uncle as usual poring over his old classics, which he seldom exchanged for

any modern work. He sometimes, indeed, read the Rambler, and talked of it as any one else would of a last year's production, but beyond this he never went. His great delight was to pore over the poets and philosophers of Greece and Rome, and to make annotations upon them in old copy-books. One of these was lying by his side as I entered, and it was not till I had seated myself and coughed rather loudly, that my uncle awoke from his reverie.

I related to him my interview with Martin, and produced the silver case. He extended his hand eagerly for it, and examined the writing on the enclosed paper with great attention. Apparently, he was disappointed at not recognising the characters, for he sighed as he laid the box down, and after a short pause, said to me :

“There are some events in my past life, of which I should like to speak with you, George, the more especially as you may have remarked some appearance of mystery in my manner with respect to our young foundling here. You are

aware, of course, that I passed the greater part of my life abroad. I do not regret it, for like the old Greek wanderer, it brought me in contact with many scenes and many men ; while, thanks to the guidance of a kind Providence, I have been able to steer equally clear of Scylla and Charybdis, which I take to be moral profligacy and sour Pharisaism.

“ My happiest days were spent in Provence, which you will recollect was the Provincia of the Romans. I was tutor in the family of a great landed proprietor, one of the remnants of the old noblesse. He was the model of elegance and grace, and you could have imagined him figuring in the old *œil de bœuf*, or sauntering down the great gallery of Versailles in attendance on the Grand Monarque. He had been a man of pleasure in his youth, but was now a strict observer of the rules of his Church. Indeed, he tried several times to convert me to his religion, but without success, though the failures never made him treat me less kindly. My pupil was a slow and heavy,

though tractable lad, whom his father would never allow to be overworked. I had, consequently, a considerable amount of leisure on my hands; and finding the chateau as dull as it was dignified, I began to form acquaintances among the neighbours.

“And now, George, I am coming to the worst part of the story. I fell in love. You may smile, perhaps, when you look upon the wrinkled, careworn man who tells you this, but then, remember, I had all the good looks and gaiety of twenty-five. Madelaine Maçon was one of the most beautiful of the beautiful girls of Provence. Her features displayed that regular and classic grace, which we generally consider the exclusive possession of the children of an Italian soil. But I shall not attempt to describe how beautiful she was, or how madly I loved her. It will be enough to say that our attachment was approved of by the parents, and even sanctioned by Monseieur le Comte, who offered me a farm on his estate, as he knew that I possessed some knowledge of

agricultural pursuits. We were married, and for the first month I was too happy to think of anything but my good fortune. My wife was tender and affectionate, and her parents were kind and well-disposed ; my land was fertile and productive, and all things seemed to be going on well.

“ By and bye, however, I discovered that my wife had her defects, the principal of which was an overweening love of admiration. I thought her manners too free, and she rallied me on my English stiffness and *mauvaise honte*. Difference of religion also created disputes between us, for my wife, urged on by her confessor, would be satisfied with nothing less than my conversion, and though unable to argue, she had always a plentiful supply of entreaties and tears. Only those who have lived much abroad, can estimate properly the influence which a Director acquires over the female mind, and the unscrupulous energy with which that influence is exerted. This difference between my wife and myself, which

had been at first overlooked, now became the cause of estrangement and coldness.

“Matters were in this state when my poor wife gave birth to a girl, whom she survived only a few days. During the closing scenes of her life, something of her former tenderness returned, and she earnestly besought my forgiveness for the past. Her affection revived all my old feelings; and when I saw her coffin descend into the earth, I sank on the ground in an agony of grief.

“The death of my wife was followed by misfortunes in business. My crops turned out badly, and I lost a large sum of money by the failure of a grain merchant in the neighbouring town. In addition to this, the country had become distasteful to me, and I resolved to give up my farm, and try my fortune in England. The Count furnished me with letters of recommendation to several English noblemen with whom he was well acquainted, and I departed, leaving my infant daughter in the charge of her mother’s relatives.

“I shall not weary you with an account of my struggles in this metropolis. They were such as required all my energies to be called into play, and they so much engrossed my attention, that I almost forgot I was a father. I continued, however, from time to time, to hear from my wife’s relatives; but, from various causes, I could not leave England, and I thought it best that, for the present, my child should continue where she was.

“At length, I succeeded in establishing the school where you found me, and then I began to think of fetching home my little daughter. Time had flown so rapidly, that I was surprised to find her, when I arrived at my sister-in-law’s house, a blooming girl of fifteen. She left her aunt’s with visible reluctance, and I was deeply grieved to find that my own child regarded me as a stranger. It was not, indeed, surprising that she should do so, or that, bred up as she had been in sunny Provence, she should think English people cold and formal. According to her mother’s wish, she had been bred a Roman

Catholic, and she looked upon our religion with antipathy and dislike. The same coolness began to subsist between us, which had existed in her mother's case. I was too proud to ask my child to love me, and too clear-sighted not to see that she was pining for the country which she had left. A sense of this made me irritable, and perhaps tyrannical, while my daughter's high spirit could not brook submission. She made no reply to my reproaches, but there was a dark, sullen expression about her dark eye, sometimes relieved by a sharp flash of indignation, which told very plainly what was passing within. At length our mutual position became so uncomfortable that I could endure it no longer. Her aunt sided with her, and begged her to seek in her house an asylum from paternal tyranny. This phrase happened to fall under my eye, and I determined at once to prevent any further correspondence. I communicated my wish to Adeline, but she rebelled immediately against my decision. Her aunt, she said, had been a

second mother to her at a time when she most needed a mother's love, and she could not give up writing to her. It was her only consolation in this cold and miserable Angleterre.

“I have often thought since, George, that if I had thrown my arms about my child's neck, and told her how dear she was to me, matters would never have come to this pass. But I had entrenched myself too strongly in paternal pride, and forgetting that I myself was to blame for neglecting my responsibilities with regard to my daughter, I expected that she would discharge, notwithstanding, every tittle of her duty to me. I told her, therefore, that she must at once choose between my house and that of her aunt, and abide by the choice. She was frightened and repelled by my sternness, and expressed her desire to return to France at once. I made arrangements with my sister-in-law for her board, and she left me, never to look upon my face again.”

My uncle rested his forehead on his hands and sobbed audibly. I endeavoured to whisper

a few words of consolation ; but for some time he did not heed me. At length, recovering himself by a strong effort, he resumed :

“ What you say is kindly meant, George, but it cannot exonerate my conscience from the self-reproach which I feel I have deserved. Knowing my own criminal neglect as a father in past times, I ought to have borne with the petulance of a child. It is true that I loved her tenderly now, and after she was gone, and the temporary irritation had subsided, my heart often sank within me when I thought how cheerful she would make my desolate and solitary home. Sometimes I determined to send for her again ; but pride intervened, and now and then a better feeling whispered that it would be cruelty to expose her, a second time, to what she considered a weary exile, for the sake of my selfish gratification. At last, I thought of going over to visit my sister-in-law and entering into an explanation with her and my child. It was so intolerable, that solitary, childless feeling, that I could support it no

longer. I was about writing to my relative, and entreating both her and my child to overlook the past, when a letter sealed with black, and bearing the French post-mark, was put into my hands."

He paused again, and his voice shook with suppressed emotion as he continued ;

"The letter was from my sister-in-law. She told me in terms of bitter self-reproach, that she had allowed my daughter to receive the addresses of a young Englishman who had been staying for some time in Provence, and with whom they had become acquainted at the house of a mutual friend. He had at length made a proposal of marriage, but having some reason, from his own admissions, to suspect that his parents would be averse to the match, she had at once requested that the affair might go no further. But my unhappy child, spoiled by her indulgence, and deficient in those home feelings that can alone ensure cheerful obedience, at once revolted against her aunt's authority. My sister-in-law threatened to apply

to me, and this produced for some days a feigned and sullen submission, which continued until the unhappy girl eloped one day, and in company with her lover, fled from the town.

“ Her aunt afterwards received a letter from her in Germany, stating that she was married to the object of her affections, and was most anxious to obtain the forgiveness of her family, and to be reconciled to them.

“ My sister-in-law wrote to her kindly in reply, and a short correspondence took place between them, in the course of which my daughter mentioned that she was going to England with her husband. The last note that her aunt received from her was dated from London, and written in a very incoherent style. She complained of her husband's relations, and even hinted that his own treatment of her was not so kind as it had been. She begged her aunt to take her in once more, and to meet her, if possible, at Boulogne on a particular day. The letter concluded with words that have ever since occurred to my mind and caused me much bitter self-reproach.

“ ‘I have none left but you, my second mother, for, owing to the indifference of a husband, and the harsh severity of a father, there is no other relative to whom I can fly in the hour of affliction.’

“ Her aunt could not reply to the letter, for no special address was given in it ; but she at once started off to Boulogne, and, after waiting some days, wrote to me this letter, her anxiety for her niece having overcome the anger which she felt at my former conduct. I am in no mood to relate what followed, or to describe the painful meeting which took place between my sister-in-law and myself, for of course I hurried off to France immediately. It will be sufficient to say that all our exertions to discover the lost one were ineffectual, and that from that time to this I have never seen my child again.”

He now gave full vent to his grief, and listened impatiently while I endeavoured to console him. Bitterly did he accuse his own imprudence and want of affection in allowing his child to grow up at a distance from him, separated from all those kindly interchanges of

feeling which rivet so closely the paternal tie. In order to divert his mind from these self-reproaches, I asked if he had never received any further tidings from his daughter.

He replied despairingly : "None."

"But have you no idea what became of her?"

"A steamer was wrecked in the Channel about the time," he replied ; "and hearing that a gentleman, accompanied by a lady, who in appearance must, according to the description, have resembled my daughter, had been among the passengers, we concluded that they had perished in this manner."

"Yet you knew her husband's name," I said.

"Circumstances led us to believe," he answered, "that it was a feigned one, and it seemed that the party at whose house my sister-in-law had met him was only a casual acquaintance, and knew nothing of his family."

"It is very strange," I said musingly.

I then communicated to my uncle the tale I had heard from Martin, but there appeared so little hope of ascertaining distinctly whether there was any identity between the lost daughter

and the person mentioned in his narrative, that we both concluded it would be unwise to form hopes that might in the end prove fallacious.

“At times,” said my uncle, “I think I can trace some resemblance in this boy’s features to those of my poor child; but again I feel that perhaps after all it may be one of those illusions which hope and fancy love to create, and which are permitted by a merciful Creator to deaden the keenness of the edge of sorrow. At all events, it might be premature to speak to him on the subject, but I would not willingly lose sight of him till I know more. In the meantime, George, let the theme sleep, and forgive me if I ask you to leave me now. I want to be alone, to wrestle with the feelings which this story has called up.”

I pressed my uncle’s hand warmly, and assured him of my most earnest and heartfelt sympathy. He returned the pressure, and we parted. Before I left the house, I ascertained from Jack, Martin’s address, intending to seek him out, and, if possible, glean from him some further particulars.

CHAPTER XI.

THE next day, after the usual studies were over, I set out for the River Lea. It was a fine summer's afternoon, and my spirits, which had not been very high of late, yielded to the genial influence of the sunshine and the light breezes which played around me. Man is to a great extent the creature of external circumstances, and I could not help feeling exhilarated by my walk, and the distant aspect of the green fields, glimpses of which were discerned from time to time between the stiff villas of the suburb through which I was wending my way.

Martin's new abode was a small house near the river. Two or three lounging urchins were gazing with all their might into the windows of the shop, situated in front of the premises, attracted evidently by the gingerbread and apples which occupied the shelves. A narrow passage to the left conducted me into a small yard, leading down to the river brink, close to which were attached two boats, sheltered by a wooden shed. In the middle of the yard sat a man smoking, whom I at once recognised as Mr. Martin himself. He rose from his chair, and asked me if I would take a boat, adding in an under tone :

“ We shall be able to talk better on the river than here.”

I signified my acquiescence, and he proceeded to unmoor one of the craft which I had noticed, seated in which we were soon shooting along, far out of the reach of listeners.

“ You see, Sir,” said Martin, as he rested on his oars, “ my shop boy has sharp ears, and now that I have left off my old trade, I hope for

ever, I should not like him to guess at what I have been."

I told Mr. Martin I was glad to see him there, and asked him how he had contrived to raise money enough to hire his present premises.

"Why, Sir," he replied, "I got a little ready cash from the sale of a crossing which I held, and then my father was reconciled to me the other day, and gave me something more."

"And you like your new occupation?" I inquired.

"Well, Mr. Singleton," he replied, "it is better than begging, for though I work harder I feel more satisfaction in what I get, and I think as I put each shilling into my pocket, 'there, my fine fellow, I have no reason to be ashamed of you.' Perhaps, too, you would not think it, but I find I can save something at present, whereas before what I got during the week was certain to be all gone by Saturday night."

"It is God's blessing on honest labour," said I; "but are you not afraid of being recognised by some of your old companions?"

“No, Sir,” he answered, “I kept very much aloof from them when I was in their neighbourhood, and what with being always dressed up in some queer fashion or other, I was so unlike myself that I don’t think they would know me now. The other day, indeed, two fellows came up here dressed as fine as lords, whom I knew very well to be no better than they should be, and as chance would have it they hired one of these boats from my place. They began chaffing me as I rowed them along, and I pretended to be a simple sort of fellow, for I saw they were up to some trick. Presently they pretended that they wanted to land, and asked me to set them ashore for a few minutes, intending to run off and leave me in the lurch. But I fixed them, for I pulled alongside of a sort of island about a mile up, with a tremendous swamp on the side furthest from the river, which I knew they would never cross, for these town-bred fellows are as afraid of wetting their feet as if they were so many cats. Well they tried to levant, and examined the

place on all sides, but it was no use ; and there was I sitting in my boat laughing all the time in my sleeve. By and by they came back again looking very crestfallen.

“ ‘Hullo, my man !’ says one, ‘bring the boat ’ere, vill ye?’

“ I was just then in the middle of the stream, so I looked at him very coolly, and says I :

“ ‘ I hope you like your lodgings there, for you will not get any better to-night.’

“ ‘What do you mean feller?’ says he, ‘do you hintend to hinsult a gent?’

“ ‘ Oh !’ says I, ‘that won’t go down with me, my lad, for I have seen you two elsewhere before now ; and so if you please hand over the fare, or I shall row off with my boat, and you may wait for a couple of days, perhaps, before anything else comes this way.’

“ Well, Sir, they both turned as scarlet as a couple of turkey-cocks, and abused me with every bad name they could think of ; but I made them cash up before they came into the boat, which at last they were glad to do. They tried

a little nonsense when they got out, but they were two insignificant sort of chaps, and so I kicked one this way, and another that, and I have never set eyes on either of them since."

When Mr. Martin had finished his story, I asked him several questions about the young lady who died in his house. He had only seen her once, however, and entertained but a confused recollection of her general appearance. He informed me that both his wife and himself had made every effort by advertisements to discover who the lady belonged to, but that they had not been successful in obtaining the slightest clue to her connections.

Disappointed by the information or rather the non-information which I had obtained, I retraced my steps to the College where I found Packman waiting in my room. After some unimportant conversation he asked me to accompany him to an evening party, at his aunt, Mrs. Somerton's, where we were to meet several celebrities, who were then figuring as the lions of religious society.

I have said so little of Packman hitherto, that on the present occasion I feel it incumbent on me to give him the benefit of a special introduction to my readers. He was not distinguished as a student, and though really and unfeignedly pious, suffered much in the opinion of those around him from his proneness to levity and lightness of spirits. His father nourished a strong feeling against the melancholy and gloom which distinguished certain of his religious acquaintances, and like most men who take a decided antipathy to one extreme was very much in danger of falling into its opposite. He said rightly that true Christianity was not to be recommended by the sour looks and upturned eyes of a morose Pharisaism ; but unhappily he did not distinguish sufficiently between overstrained seriousness and an exaggerated cheerfulness that was not always in place. His sons were encouraged to aim at the character of religious wits, and provided the *bons mots* which they retailed could be fathered on some popular preacher, or eminent Exeter

Hall leader, his applause and approbation were rarely withheld.

Before my young friend had attained the age of fifteen, he knew by heart a budget of facetiæ, ascribed (whether correctly or not might have admitted of a doubt) to the late estimable though eccentric Rowland Hill. Encouraged by the applause bestowed on these anecdotes, he had amassed others drawn from more profane sources, which he took the liberty of altering to suit his company, so that a witticism uttered originally by Sheridan or Hook, became in his hands the remark of some religious wit. There is no character more undesirable, even in worldly society, than that of a professed joker; and it was not, perhaps, astonishing that many persons, notorious for their unbending gravity, considered my friend too facetious for a Missionary. Yet he disappointed their predictions after all, and when a little experience and the operation of his natural good sense had modified an erroneous though pardonable tendency, he became an

eminently useful and active member of the Missionary band.

Latterly he had sought my society very much, and I was pleased to find that under a light surface, there existed many sterling and solid qualities. As we were going along he told me that his aunt was a great collector of lions, and that whenever a celebrated Missionary or a noted religious traveller could be procured, she immediately secured their presence at her tea-parties.

On our arrival, the door was opened by a very staid footman dressed in black, who had much the air of a dignified clergyman. We were ushered up-stairs into a drawing-room, only as yet moderately full of guests. By Packman's advice I ensconced myself in a retired corner, where we turned over three or four times a book of prints, while waiting for the more distinguished visitors. Those who had already arrived, being mostly ladies, were engaged in some mysterious female occupation, of which long threads and formidable-looking

needles formed the principal instruments, while they conversed in low tones about dear Mr. So-and-so's late discourse, and the meetings of the last season. "Dull topics enough," perhaps some reader will exclaim ; but at least, my good friend, they are better than the scandal to which, perhaps, you have been accustomed, or the senseless stupidity of the card-table. These people at least, spoke of what they understood, and if no young ladies aspired to scream out of tune a mispronounced Italian ballad, or to deafen the ears of the company with the last new polka, you are more fastidious than me if you quarrel with them for it.

But now a buzz runs through the company, and all eyes are turned to the door. The distinguished guests are arriving. First comes Doctor Ajaci, an interesting Italian, who has been, it is whispered, incarcerated in the terrible Inquisition. The Doctor has scarcely been received with due honours, when Mr. Simkins arrives from Lebanon, with a living Syrian Prince in full Oriental costume. A black

fugitive slave from the Southern States follows, having in his train a host of *Dii minores*, who write tracts, religious poetry, and articles for religious newspapers.

Each of the celebrities speedily drew about him a small knot of admirers. Dr. Ajaci, a sallow-looking man with a face close shaven, and somewhat of a sneering expression about his mouth, began declaiming in Italian against popery, his eloquence being “done into English” bit by bit by his interpréter, a short lively gentleman with spectacles, who stood by his side, and who was facetiously likened by my friend Packman to the showman of a menagerie.

A group of ladies clustered round the Syrian Prince, who was reading an Arabic letter in the nasal chanting tone of his country, and by particular desire finished it cross-legged on the floor. In another corner, the fugitive slave was illustrating the tortures practised by the liberty-loving Americans on their human chattels with the assistance of two of the ladies’ needles. Packman and I wandered with a few others

from group to group, and contemplated the different lions at our leisure, while Mrs. Somerton, hurried and anxious, scrutinized the proceedings with the eye of an hostess.

“Only think now, Frederick,” she said to her nephew, as we found ourselves opposite to her in one of our transitions between two of the groups, “only think, it is nine o’clock, and Mr. Blough has not yet arrived. It is just like him. He is *so* eccentric, almost rude I may say.”

“Well,” said Packman, “I don’t think he stands much upon ceremony. But why do you have him here at all?”

“Oh, why you know he has just returned from Syria, and then he is so odd. Would you believe it, the last time he was here, Dr. Schmutter the great philologist brought such an interesting Chinese, who came in his dress, tail and all, and Mr. Blough walked up to him, and taking hold of the poor man’s tail, asked him if he would not like a fried dog for supper. Horrid, wasn’t it? But he is so strange.”

“ Ah,” said Packman “ that reminds me of an anecdote which—”

But Mrs. Somerton had retreated, and was now busily conversing a few yards off with some new arrival, so the anecdote remained untold.

In a few minutes, the serious-looking footman announced Mr. Blough, and I turned round to examine the figure of so eccentric a gentleman. He was a stout, thick-set man, with grizzled hair and sharp grey eyes, which seemed to announce their owner's intention to penetrate all shams, of whatever kind they might be. At first sight you would have rather shrunk from the keen, inquisitive glance, that appeared to be reading your character, and examining into your pretensions ; at the second you would perhaps think that straightforward honesty and sincerity, with perhaps a dash of whimsicality, were never so clearly portrayed as on the weather-beaten features before you.

Mr. Blough threw a hasty glance at the lions and the lion-worshippers, which did not seem to indicate unmitigated satisfaction, and then

striding up to the group surrounding the Syrian Prince, he ejaculated :

“ Why, in the name of all that’s singular, who have we here ? ”

Mr. Simkins stepped forward, and said simperingly :

“ A most interesting youth, my dear Sir, Prince Abd el Musheef, from Mount Lebanon.”

“ Prince Fiddlestick ! ” replied Mr. Blough, “ why, that fellow blacked my shoes at Beyrout.”

He then addressed his Syrian Highness in very guttural Arabic, and soon drew from him a renunciation of his dignity. Perhaps he might have proceeded farther, if Mr. Simkins had not good-humouredly interposed.

“ Do not blame the poor young man, Mr. Blough,” said he, “ for I am afraid it is my ignorance that ought to be censured. The friend who introduced this youth to me said he was a Hadgi, which I rather carelessly, I fear, have translated Prince.”

“ Ah,” said Mr. Blough, “ that is just like my dear countrymen. Always despising and

ridiculing foreign titles, and yet ready to go through fire and water to get hold of some one with a handle to his name. Why, Hadgi means a pilgrim, and is an appellation assumed in the East by the lowest and commonest people. But come, your prince is a very honest fellow, and stole infinitely less of my blacking than others of his countrymen, and that is some recommendation, let me tell you."

Mr. Blough passed on, and by and bye the group collected around the ex-prince began to disperse. Mr. Simkins evidently felt a little uncomfortable, and vanished with his *protégé* as soon as he decently could. A few young ladies murmured their indignation at that "horrid Mr. Blough, who was always destroying everything that was poetical and sentimental by his rude remarks," but they accompanied their comments with apprehensive looks at the dreaded man, as if they feared that he might possibly attack them next.

The awe-inspiring Mr. Blough next directed his steps towards the group which clustered

round Dr. Ajaci, just as that fascinating person was concluding an harangue embodied in the choicest Etruscan. Not Coriolanus, when he fluttered the Volscians in Corioli, nor Achilles, when his single shout rolled back the flood of Trojan success, could have startled their respective opponents more than the advance of this common-sense-looking man did the coterie whom he approached. The little interpreter did his best, but after a few minutes Mr. Blough turned away with a half-audible "pshaw!" and joined the listeners to the fugitive slave, who was detailing in a quiet, sensible manner the particulars of his escape from a tyrannical and barbarous master."

"All this is very well," said Mr. Blough, as the negro paused in his recital for a few minutes; "but what do you say, my friend, to the Apostle's sending back Onesimus to his master Philemon?"

The two men looked at each other steadily for a few minutes, and a slight tremor passed over the dark features of the African.

“Sir,” said he in reply, “I would tell you a little story in answer to your question. Once a poor slave, hungry and exhausted, was flying from his pursuers, and he met near the frontiers of Canada an English traveller. Freedom was before him—worse than death behind. Two man-hunters were on his track, and he had just time to say to the Englishman: ‘Have pity upon me, for the sake of our common God, and in the name of that liberty which is your country’s boast. I have seen my mother scourged to death, my sister sold to shame, and unless you can save me, I must endure agonies which it would only shock you to describe.’ The traveller listened to the appeal, and when the blood-hunters came up, one was felled to the ground by the stout English cudgel, and the other ran away. The traveller aided the fugitive and never abandoned him till he had seen him safe in Canada. This is my answer to your question: I was the slave—you were my deliverer.”

“What,” said Mr. Blough, apparently taken

by surprise, "is it you? I'm glad to see you," and he shook him warmly by the hand.

"Noble! generous! heroic!" ejaculated the ladies, who had been talking a few minutes ago of "that horrid Mr. Blough."

"Pshaw!" said the ungallant man, as he retreated to the other side of the room.

My attention was now attracted by a new arrival, in the person of a clergyman well known for the interest which he took in questions relating to the conversion of the Jews. I had some slight acquaintance with Dr. Monckton, and his eye soon singled me out. He drew me to a secluded corner of the room, and said:

"I rejoice to hear, Mr. Singleton, that you have been a chosen instrument in our Master's hand of effecting the conversion of two persons, for whom I have the greatest esteem. Mr. Monçada and his daughter will be received, by baptism, into the Christian Church next month. They are now preparing for this solemn rite; and it is gratifying for me to say,

as it doubtless is for you to hear, that they owe their first serious impressions on the subject of Christianity to your conversation.”

I uttered a mental ejaculation of gratitude, and then chid my selfish heart for the repining thought which succeeded my first pleasurable emotions. I could not flatter myself with the hope that Rachel could ever be mine, and it was bitter—very bitter—to think that I must soon bid her farewell for ever. Yet in the exertion to conquer self, and to rise superior to the feelings which oppressed me, I found a consolation that repaid me for all my struggles. I could contemplate my past work with the conviction that at least it had wrought out for me no mere earthly reward.

CHAPTER XII.

I MUST now beg the reader to suppose that twelve months have elapsed since the events occurred, which were noticed in my last chapter. I am sitting in my College room, and Merton has just been with me to open his heart and to communicate his happiness. Rachel loves him, her father approves of his suit, and he will soon lead her to the nuptial altar. He has been making me the confidant of his plans for the future. He is to give up the Mission, and settle in England by the wish of an old surviving relative, who loves him like a son. The happiness of his soul is depicted on his cheerful

countenance as he presses my hand affectionately, and breathes forth a wish for my future welfare.

“Oh, Singleton ! may you some day be as happy as I feel now ! May you know the felicity of possessing a heart that loves you !”

He is gone, and something like a chilling sense of loneliness and isolation oppresses my mind. I am half-disposed to mourn over the wreck of bygone fancies, and to lament that I have awakened for ever from a fascinating dream. Yet there is no bitterness in my disappointment, no change of the milk of human kindness into gall. It seems that the tie of earthly affection which has been so gradually severed, has joined again to unite me to a higher and imperishable object, and that the love to a pure and noble-hearted woman has been refined and elevated into love to God.

At this juncture, a message was brought to me from the Principal, requesting a personal interview. I found him in his room, where he

received me with more cordiality than he had ever displayed before. He had seen Dr. Monckton lately, and that gentleman had spoken of me in high terms of commendation. He wished now to offer me immediate ordination, to be followed by a speedy departure from England. India was to be my destination, and the Principal spoke with enthusiasm of the interesting field of labour that lay open before me. There is nothing which so much inspires confidence in a youthful bosom as the manifestation of feelings above the ordinary, dry, conventional tone of worldly intercourse. I felt that, during my residence at College, I had been retiring and unsocial, perhaps too much so. My conscience accused me of brooding over day-dreams, instead of directing my attention to practical realities, too often the besetting sin of a sensitive mind and romantic disposition. I resolved I would in some measure make an atonement for it by unbosoming myself to the Principal.

He heard me attentively and kindly, and

while he condoled with me on the pain which I had suffered, he pointed out that a separation from my earthly idol should only nerve and invigorate my spirit for my future career. By mortifying the soft, delusive dreaminess which had hitherto enchained my energies, it would, he trusted, awaken me to higher and nobler aims.

How many of the follies and vagaries of youth might be arrested or wisely modified by the sound, judicious yet sympathising advice of one older in years! Austerity, by inspiring dread, often prevents disclosures which would prove in the highest degree beneficial. The abuses of the Confessional in another Church have raised in many minds an unwillingness to recognise its uses, among which perhaps may be reckoned the opportunities that it affords to the young and inexperienced, of seeking the guidance and direction of those whom self-discipline and knowledge of the world have made acquainted with many secrets which are

yet hidden from the ardent and impetuous mind of youth.

My time was, for the next two months, so fully occupied, that I had no leisure for reveries. A sense of what was due to the sacred office to which I was aspiring made me a diligent student, and I rarely left my room except for a little necessary exercise. Feelings of delicacy kept me away from the house of Mr. Monçada, and my uncle was now buried in a new edition of the "Hecuba" of Euripides, which he was preparing for the press. I generally, therefore, directed my walks towards the River Lea, and proved on such occasions a good customer to Mr. Martin.

One day, as we were resting a little after a hard pull, he asked me when I was going abroad. I informed him, and he said :

"I almost envy you, Mr. Singleton, for change is so delightful. I am afraid you will lecture me, but I do feel a strange longing sometimes after my old vagabond life. There

was always something new every day, and even one's mishaps brought variety. I find the time rather dull now."

"But I trust," said I, "you do not repent your reformation?"

"No, Sir, I can't say that exactly," he replied; "and I know my feelings are wrong, but it is human nature you know. I should not be surprised if you see me out where you are going to some of these days."

"Well, but," I said, "you must remember the old adage, that 'a rolling stone gathers no moss.'"

"No, Sir," he answered, "it is little moss indeed that I have gathered. There is my old playmate Dick Somers, whose exercises I used to do at school, and whom everybody laughed at, he was so dull and steady. Dick is a rich man now, and has his horse and chaise like any lord, while I—" And he sighed.

"Because he has perseverance," said I, "and you have none."

"Ah, Sir, I believe that is it; and yet," he

added, in a thoughtful tone, "I could persevere enough when I wanted to play any particular part. Do you know, Sir, I was two months learning how to imitate an old sailor and getting up sea slang. Yet, somehow or another, I can never persevere in this business work."

I gave him some serious and very plain-spoken advice, but I found that a vagrant and wandering propensity was so engrafted in him, that what I said produced little effect. He listened, indeed, with attention, and seemed to feel I was speaking the truth, but when we parted, the last thing he said was :

"I am sure, Mr. Singleton, we shall meet again out there."

Little did I think at the time to what a singular result that meeting would lead.

When my examination for ordination was over, I spent the afternoon with my uncle, who agreed, for that period, to lay aside his learned labours.

Before I entered the study, I had a short

interview with Jack, who, intent upon his Euclid, was sitting under a tree in the garden, endeavouring to unravel the intricacies of the far-famed *pons asinorum*. He had grown into a fine healthy-looking lad, very different to the little ragged urchin he was when I first encountered him.

“I am glad to see you so usefully employed,” said I, laying my hand on his shoulder as he rose to speak to me.

“I am doing my best, Mr. Singleton,” he replied; “but these lines and angles do puzzle me so, and I am afraid sometimes I shall never get over them. I am sorry, Sir, to hear you are going away, for I should have liked you to advise me a little.”

He paused as if he had something more to say, and I encouraged him to proceed.

“You see, Sir, I don’t like to do nothing, and to live at Mr. Sainsby’s expense. I’m a great boy now, and I should like to earn my bread if I could.”

“ Well,” said I, “ the wish is a laudable one ; but what could you do ? ”

“ Very little, I am afraid, Sir ; but I think I should like to go to sea.”

“ To sea ! ” I repeated. “ What has put that into your head ? ”

“ Why, Sir,” he replied, “ I have been reading about Captain Cook, and how he rose from being a poor boy to be a great man, and I think I should like to do like Captain Cook. Will you ask Mr. Sainsby to let me go to sea, Sir ? ”

“ We must find out what my uncle thinks about it,” said I, as I knocked at the study door.

My uncle was seated in his *sanctum*, clad as usual in his old flannel dressing-gown and intent upon his “ Hecuba.” He raised his eyes as I approached, and closed the book with a sigh.

“ I hope I do not interrupt you,” said I as I seated myself.

“No, George, no,” he replied, “but as I read the pathetic lament of the captive Trojan Queen for her lost child, it awakened past recollections and made me experience a touch of melancholy, connecting it as I did with the fate of one who I fear was equally unfortunate. Strange,” he continued, musingly, “that maternal love should be so much stronger than the affection of a father. Agamemnon could give up his daughter to his ambition, and only shed a few doubtful tears as he gazed on the sad scene. But here, the mother’s heart strings seem ready to break when parting from her child.”

“There is nothing more powerful,” said I, “than a mother’s love. But why, my dear uncle, do you select a subject so painful for your studies.”

“It is a sort of penance which I inflict upon myself,” he replied, “and to which I feel my mind strangely drawn. Though every line condemns me, I have a kind of heartfelt sympathy with the subject that I do not like to

quit it. I feel too some consolation in reflecting how differently I should act now. But to change the subject, I hear you are going to leave England soon."

"Yes," I replied, "almost immediately after my ordination."

"I shall be sorry to lose you, George, and yet you are devoting yourself to a noble task. May God give you grace to discharge it aright."

"I trust He will," I answered fervently. "And now I wish to speak with you about Jack. He wants to go to sea."

My uncle did not at first like this intelligence, for he seemed to feel that the boy was a companion to his solitude. He had taken considerable pains with him, and found in the task not only a welcome distraction from thoughts which he owned had troubled him much of late; but also that kind of pleasure which all who love teaching for its own sake experience, as the young and plastic mind moulds itself into shape under the experienced

and scientific hand. He agreed with me, however, that it was better that the boy should have some pursuit, and feel himself above mere dependance.

“And yet,” he continued, “how vain our attempts to be what we call independent. Well does the old Greek observe that ‘there is no mortal who is truly free.’ Some men are the slaves of money, others of power, and here in England, where we boast of freedom so much, we are the most abject slaves of conventionalities. Jack, I warrant you, has his notions of liberty, though a ship is the last place where I should have imagined he would have expected to find it.”

“Well,” said I, “there is some pleasure in roving over the wide ocean unrestrained.”

“Except by a rattan and a cat-o’-nine tails,” interrupted my uncle. “But I will place no impediment in his way, and I wish he may never regret his ‘*otium sub tegmine fagi*.’”

I endeavoured to set the boy’s wishes in the most favourable light, for my uncle was at first

hurt that he should wish to leave him, and having tolerably succeeded, I returned to the College. In my way back, I passed the house of Mr. Monçada, and could not help contrasting the former feelings with which I had often gazed upon it with my present ones. Yet the very fact that I could do this was consolatory. It showed at least that the wounds were healing, since now they could bear to be handled.

The day of ordination came, and I felt deeply impressed with that solemn and touching service, which set me apart for the discharge of the sacred functions of a herald of the Gospel. As I knelt before the altar of God, it seemed to me incredible that any could come thither with a worldly and careless heart. Sad experience has convinced me since, how even the freshest and holiest feelings may become blunted by habit and use. 'Tis thus, perhaps, that the mystical and the unseen possess so much influence over our minds. Imagination invests them with a thousand charms, which in our earthly and imperfect state would be destroyed if they

became too familiar. The beauties of the inner sanctuary can only be exposed to the gaze of those who, purified from all feelings that could produce satiety, remain invested with eternal freshness and vigorous in eternal youth.

As I issued from the cathedral, Merton met me, and pressing my hand warmly, offered his congratulations and best wishes. I had seen but little of him of late, for our occupations were now different, and our aims diverse. Yet some touch of old feelings was awakened in my mind as we walked on together, and I was rejoiced to believe that I could now look upon him no longer as a rival.

He had ceased to reside in the College, and we parted at the gate. I was about to enter, when he called me back, and said :

“By the bye, Singleton, I had forgotten. You are in orders, now, and as my marriage takes place next week, I am sure both Rachel and myself would feel great pleasure if you could perform the ceremony. Mr. —— would have no objection, and as the friend of both,

no person can be fitter for the office. What do you say?"

I murmured a hasty consent and turned away, for I was afraid of giving some visible indication of what I felt. Strange that I, who loved her so much, should be the one after all to bestow her upon another. Yet I could not but feel thankful, that neither had guessed the secret which I had kept so carefully concealed. They would now plight their troth to each other in the sight of God and man, without a suspicion that their union had caused even the slightest pang to one respected and valued by them both. Had it been otherwise, had I yielded to the selfish dictates of passion, or even had I spoken before I knew that Rachel loved another, I felt that I could not have looked on so calmly, and that the holy words of benediction would almost have been a mockery from my lips.

The day arrived, and I thought Rachel had never looked so beautiful as when she stood before the altar arrayed in virgin white. My

voice faltered and my hand trembled for a moment as I joined those hands which could never be severed, except by death. The sacrifice was now completed, and I felt myself released forever from the chains of a mortal love. When I knelt for the concluding mental prayer, I thanked God for having led me along a path of difficulty, without allowing me to say or do anything upon which I could now look back with annoyance or regret.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE hour of my departure was now arrived. During the last month of my stay in England, I had been allowed by the rules of the college to pass the time principally in the society of my friends. Mr. and Mrs. Merton remained in town that they might bid me farewell; and even good kind Mr. Templeton came up to London that he might see the last of his old pupil. Some people write and talk of the grief of partings, but I must confess that I felt little directly painful emotion. My mind sank into

a sort of unrealizing stupor, and I could not persuade myself that I was bidding perhaps a final farewell to my friends, as I shook hands with them for the last time. It appeared only as if I was going for a short excursion, from which I should speedily return. It seems indeed a merciful provision of Providence, that we rarely feel our troubles to their full extent at the time when they occur. Nature kindly drugs the mind with a species of opiate, that blunts the sting of sorrow and deadens the sensibilities to its stroke.

The college had been a comfortable and happy home to me ; and there were some of my companions from whom I parted with regret. Yet a separation from these I had always looked forward to, and it grieved me less than I had imagined it would have done when the time came. There was some prospect that we might meet once more in distant regions, and although this was not certain, yet the probability was consolatory. But when I realized to the full that I had perhaps gazed for the last time on the

venerable features of Mr. Templeton, and that my return, if indeed I ever returned, would be unwelcomed by my uncle's kind and almost parental greeting, I experienced a sensation of loneliness and desolation bitter to feel and painful to describe.

Time, however, works wonders in removing the poignancy of sorrow, and a chastened yet sincere Christian hope does more. When we can look beyond this troubled scene to another meeting, and reflect that then we need no longer dread a separation, the contemplation of the few years during which we must be severed from the society of those we love, appears to lose much of its gloom. For the soul that can nourish this hope and feed upon it, there need be no *salve eternum*, no everlasting farewell.

I should not perhaps forget to add, that the novelty of the scene around me contributed its share towards diverting my attention and enlivening my spirits. For the first three days after our departure from Southampton, the company generally seemed dull and shy of each

other, for most Englishmen approach very gradually towards a travelling acquaintance. Soon, however, some began to look over the edges of their newspapers at a neighbour, and by degrees the writing desks on the saloon tables grew more rare.

Our vessel contained the usual complement of young cadets and writers fresh from Haileybury and Addiscombe, with boyish countenances, manly airs, and an insatiate appetite for cigars and tobacco in every shape. Then there were some officers returning from their furlough, who rather seemed to look down upon the noisy gaiety of their youthful *compagnons de voyage*. Three or four young ladies were going out to India, under the charge of a Missionary's wife; and a few tourists accompanied us as far as Alexandria. A lieutenant of the navy, charged with the mails, completed our equipment.

On Sundays I read prayers and preached to the passengers, who generally assembled for service in the large saloon, and it gave me great pleasure to find them always decorous

and generally attentive. I can scarcely, however, concur in the opinion of some that a voyage by sea is favourable to devotional feelings. There is indeed a magnificence and grandeur about the mighty element whose wild waves play around you, which may for a time engage the imagination, and call forth thoughts of no common or ordinary kind ; but we soon grow weary of nothing but *pontus et aer*, and when we turn for relief to the cabin or the deck, we find the interior of a vessel but too faithful a resemblance of the dullness and vapid *ennui* of the most third-rate watering-place.

At Gibraltar we saw the usual lions, and one of our number narrowly escaped falling down St. Michael's cave, through which, an old Indian officer, Colonel Stanwood, informed us the monkeys had passed from Africa to Europe. The same gentleman showed the young ladies a straight piece of rock in one of the galleries as the remnants of the Pillar of Hercules, which he maintained was nothing but his club petrified. Each of his fair auditors made a careful note of

these facts in brazen-clasped diaries, that always accompanied them while on shore. I was obliged, however, to set the Colonel right when he pointed out the English church as a mosque of the Moors, and pronounced a Jew orangeman one of the Muftis.

This gentleman had spent so many years in India, that he had almost forgotten all his European knowledge, and misapplied everything that he recollected. He was great, however, in stories about tiger-hunts, Tippoo Saib, and rajahs with unpronounceable names. The young ladies looked up to him as to a perfect hero, though it appeared on cross-questioning that he had never been in action. He was, however, looking forward with great hope to being made a general, as he was only sixty years of age.

I found the Colonel somewhat shy of me, when he discovered the object of my voyage to India.

He had a profound antipathy to Missionaries, whose agency he connected with everything wicked and horrible that had occurred in India,

from the massacre of Vellore downwards. He disbelieved in the possibility of a native being converted, and advised me with great earnestness to take my passage home in the return packet from Alexandria. At first, thinking I was a chaplain, he had attended regularly the Sunday services, but I never saw him after he ascertained that I was only a Missionary, while once I overheard him whispering to Mr. Kishmagur, an equally antiquated civilian, who had endeavoured to convince me that "black fellows had no souls" to the effect that he could not listen with edification to "a black padre." I learned accidentally from one of the officers, that this term referred not to the clergyman's own colour, but to that of his hearers.

Mr. Kishmagur was a little more liberal in his notions, but he astonished and pained me rather one day by drawing a parallel between Christianity and Mohammedanism, and not very obscurely hinting his preference for the latter. I expressed my sentiments rather energetically on that occasion, and the Indian

dignitary grew afterwards very distant, and whenever I came in his vicinity, was always sure to descry some object of interest that could only be seen from the other side of the deck. A young officer of the name of Campbell, stood near us when the conversation took place, and when the judge was out of hearing, he told me he hoped that I would not form my opinion of Indian officials in general from the two gentlemen referred to.

“Nothing,” said Captain Campbell, “could be more unworthy of Britons, or of professing Christians, than the conduct of some of the European officers of the Company a few years ago. Several instances occurred of Englishmen embracing openly and publicly the Heathen and Mohammedan creeds. I myself knew a man who kept Brahmins in his house to perform idolatrous ceremonies for him, and there was another at Vaudipoor who carried his zeal for the false Prophet so far as to make the pilgrimage to Mecca.”

“Horrible!” I exclaimed.

“No doubt it appears so to you,” he replied, “and I trust it is shocking enough in my eyes ; but I don’t know, residence in India makes you accustomed to many things which you would shudder at when you first set your foot on its shores. You must consider, however, that the Government were a good deal to blame in this matter. Young men left their own country then mere boys, with principles unformed and minds uncultivated. They rarely returned till after thirty or forty years’ service, and during this period half their time was spent up country, far from the influence of virtuous female society, and exposed to all kinds of temptation from the suggestions of the natives around them, who often purposely led them into vice that they might acquire a hold upon them.”

“But do you think,” said I, “that matters are better now?”

“Undoubtedly they are,” he answered, “Indian officers and civilians hold more intercourse with Europe at present than formerly, and

there are at this time men in either service who would be an honour to any country or church. Still there remains much to be done. The number of chaplains should be increased, for at present some chaplains superintend a tract of country much larger than two or three English dioceses put together."

"And do the chaplains," I inquired, "agree well with the Missionaries?"

"I am afraid they don't," replied Captain Campbell, "in fact, I rather think that some of them a little look down upon them. Perhaps there is the same jealousy existing, which we find in our profession between King's officers and Company's officers. But all things considered, a great deal of allowance ought to be made for the chaplains. They are fettered on all sides by the Government, and are, in fact, considered more as officers of the Ecclesiastical department, than as ministers of the Gospel. Then you know the people at Leadenhall Street don't like their meddling with the natives, although a passage in their

charter expressly provides that the Company's chaplains shall, in addition to their English duties, be bound to acquire one or two of the Indian languages, in order to 'instruct the Gentiles,' as the old document quaintly words it, 'in the principles of Christianity.' "

Our conversation was here interrupted by the approach of a passenger, with whom both of us had formed a slight acquaintance. Mr. George Alexander Minton was a short, fair-complexioned young man, with large blue eyes, which seemed always expressive of wonderment and credulity. He was the beau-ideal of a hero-worshipper, and almost every one he met was a hero to him. He delighted in asking questions, and perhaps might have acquired by this means a valuable fund of information, had he known how to digest what was told him. But as some persons trust implicitly in everything they see printed in a book, so Mr. Minton thought everything he heard equally true. Thus his brain had stored up a heap of contradictions, which he blundered out often consecutively without apparently the

slightest idea that the end of his remark was point-blank opposed to the beginning. He was going now to Madras to occupy a stool in an agent's office there, and as he was exceedingly good-natured, he became during the voyage a sort of butt for the young cadets, and even for some of the older passengers, who occasionally practised too strongly upon his credulity.

"Oh! Captain Campbell," said he, as he approached us with his usual note-book in his hand, "I have been so horrified! The Colonel has been telling me about a *sittee*. What a frightful thing! I hope women won't burn themselves opposite my windows when I get to India."

"There is no fear of that," said Campbell. "Government has abolished the practice long ago."

"Well, I'm glad of it," said Mr. Minton; "for you must know I am engaged; and if dear Jane should come out, as I hope she will by and bye, it would be dreadful if anything happened to me, for her to have to burn herself,

you know. Her mother would never consent on those terms."

"But the custom was confined to the natives," said Campbell, smiling, "and so you need not have any apprehensions."

"Ah! now," said Mr. Minton, "I thought young Ossulton was quizzing me; but are you sure it is done away with?"

"Quite," was the reply.

"Oh! thank you, Captain Campbell!" and down went the fact in the note-book. "Do you know," continued Mr. Minton, "the Colonel is a most extraordinary man? Ossulton calls him a tiger-eater. I hope I shan't have to eat tigers. I read in a book at school, that tigers and cats were of the same species, and one wouldn't like the idea, you know, of having a cat for breakfast."

"Particularly *the* cat with many tails," said the navy Lieutenant, who had joined us.

"My dear Sir," said Mr. Minton, opening his blue eyes very wide, "indeed you don't mean to say you have ever seen such a thing?"

“Positively I do though,” said the Lieutenant, who was a great frequenter of the cadets’ society.

“Well, upon my word,” said Mr. Minton, recording the fact, “you travellers see strange curiosities. One really picks up a great many pieces of intelligence by conversing with men who know the world.” And Mr. Minton gazed on the Lieutenant with an air of enthusiastic admiration.

At this moment the Captain announced that Malta was in sight, and most of the passengers crowded to the fore-part of the vessel.

“Ah !” said the Colonel, pompously, “that is Malta, the island which gave name to malt.”

“Dear me ! I must put that down,” said Mr. Minton, and again the note-book was in requisition.

“How interesting !” ejaculated the youngest Miss Somers, one of the young lady passengers. “I read of Malta in dear Miss Porter’s ‘Knights of St. John.’”

“You talk of the ‘Knights of St. John,’

Ma'am," said the Colonel. "I am a Knight of St. John. I was made in Calcutta twenty years ago, and fine fun it was too."

Mr. Minton gazed at the Colonel with as much astonishment and veneration, as he would have bestowed on a suddenly resuscitated companion of old Cœur-de-Lion.

"Well," said he, softly, "this beats the tigers! And did you really, Sir, fight with Saladdin?"

"Saladdin!" cried the Colonel; "who is he? Some black fellow, I suppose; but I never heard of him."

"You see," whispered Campbell to me, "that the schoolmaster, though generally supposed to be very much abroad at the present day, has not yet extended his travels as far as India."

"But is it possible," said I, drawing him aside, "that a person of this gentleman's rank and position can be so ignorant?"

"You must remember that he is a man of the past, not of the present day," replied my friend. "If you read that very clever book, the

‘Rambles of an Indian Official,’ you will find mention made of one of these old officers, well known in India, who mistook Jean Baptiste, a French adventurer in Scindeah’s army for St. John the Baptist.”

We landed at Malta, and, in company with Campbell, I wandered over the last retreat of ancient chivalry. Having some letters of recommendation to the Missionaries resident in Valetta, I presented them, and obtained a kindly welcome for myself and my companion. We saw the usual curiosities, which are too well known to need any description from me. In the evening we returned to the vessel, and found that our travelling companions had laden themselves with the little nick-nacks that most English voyagers delight in carrying off as memorials from every place which they visit. Mr. Minton almost filled two note-books with the wonders which he had personally inspected, and which had been related to him by his mischievous companions; while the Colonel returned, imbued with the most profound con-

tempt for the Maltese, whom he styled "a set of semi-niggers, not worthy, Sir, of English protection, and twenty newspapers."

The young ladies had copied everything that was copyable; and one, who was poetical, inspired by the *genus loci*, began composing an ode to La Valette.

"I have an idea, Singleton," said Campbell to me, as we took our last glance at Malta, and watched the beacon-light of St. Elmo till it became invisible, "I have an idea that you and I, by contributing half of our respective persons, might form together a tolerable Knight of Malta."

"How do you mean?" said I.

"Why," he replied, "it would be half parson, half soldier, which I suppose our friends here were, though I imagine the soldier half would have been the most predominant of the two. Seriously, however, I can't help feeling some admiration for those old heroes of the cross."

"They were useful in their day, undoubtedly," I answered, "and when they had served

their purpose they disappeared like other things for which Providence has no farther use. I must confess though, that I am crusader enough to regret that Christian princes should leave places which must be dear to every sincere member of our faith, under the government of those who grind to the dust by their ignorant tyranny and misrule, the disciples of Him who trod in a human form that hallowed soil."

"Yet," said my companion, "they seem destined to remain in their hands."

"Yes," I answered, "and perhaps, moreover, there is a great and solemn purpose in all this to be worked out and fulfilled. It is singular that no combination has ever answered, that had for its object the rescue of the Holy Land. The crusades were for a time successful. European kingdoms and the feudal system upreared themselves on an Asiatic soil, and now what trace have we of either. Thousands of Christian bones whitened the sands of Acre and Ascalon, yet the Frank is still an alien and a stranger in the lands which his fathers con-

quered and ruled. History presents us with few anomalies so striking."

"Well, Turkey cannot last much longer," said my companion, "she is tottering."

"She will endure her time," I replied, "like the other institutions we were speaking of, and when the hour of her dissolution arrives, no effort or policy of man can save her."

Upon reaching Cairo, we were informed that we must remain for a day in the capital of modern Egypt. Some of the party passed their time in wandering about the town, and Campbell and I, finding that we could not visit the Pyramids, agreed to try the far famed Oriental baths. Mounted on the agile and active donkies of the place, we threaded our way through the crowded and narrow lanes, until we reached an imposing building surmounted by a dome. As my friend spoke Arabic, and had visited these establishments before, we soon made ourselves at home in the midst of the turbaned crowd who were re-

clining on the couches in the outer room. We had divested ourselves of our clothes, and were just thrusting our feet into the high and in-commodious clogs, retarded by which the bather takes his hobbling way into the inner room, when a series of exclamations in a well-known voice attracted our attention. Hastily kicking off my encumbrances, I rushed into the dome-surmounted apartment, where the mist and steam almost blinded me, and for a moment or two completely took away my breath. When I recovered the full use of my senses, the cause of the clamour became visible enough.

Mr. Minton, encircled with bathing towels, which did not form the most elegant drapery in the world, was endeavouring to escape as fast as he could from an old man with a venerable beard, who in unmitigated astonishment, gazed upon the runaway open-mouthed, while his right hand grasped a large bundle of tow, covered with soap-suds. Two of the cadets in a corner were laughing heartily at the scene, and they roared still louder when Mr. Minton

hurried up to me as I entered, and began to implore my protection in the most pathetic terms.

“Keep him off, keep him off,” he shouted, fixing a terrified glance on the old bath-man, which revealed to me who was the object of his dread, “he wants to choke me. I’ve swallowed half a pail-full of soap-suds already. Don’t let him come near me, Mr. Singleton, he’s a ghoul, a genius, an old man of the sea,” continued Mr. Minton, invoking Oriental terms from his recollections of the Arabian Nights.

The bath-man shouted and gesticulated in Arabic, while perhaps to demonstrate his friendly intentions he made an advance in the direction of his victim, who darting off to avoid him, dashed all of a sudden into a cistern of cold water, which served as a sort of swimming-bath, and occupied a dark corner of the room.

I was at first alarmed, not knowing its depth, and leaving Campbell to pacify the bath-man and to lecture the cadets, I employed myself in extricating Minton, who was more

frightened than hurt, and soon emerged from the water dripping like an ancient Triton. Nothing, however, could induce him to trust himself again in the hands of the old attendant, so we sent him to recline at his leisure on one of the couches in the outer room.

Although I could hardly help laughing at the ludicrous scene before me, I remonstrated with the cadets upon their fondness for practical jokes, and discovered that they had been telling him horrible stories about murders committed in Turkish baths, though they both avowed that the aspect of the bath-man, and the wild appearance of everything around, had made him rather uncomfortable in the first instance.

Our journey from Cairo to India was chiefly marked by the listlessness and ennui which seemed to pervade the whole company. Whether this arose from the absence of any object of interest to attract our attention, or from the daily increasing heat, I am unable to say, but even the spirits of the cadets appeared

to share in the general depression. A languid attempt at merriment was indeed made, when some one endeavoured to persuade Mitten that Aden was the modern site of the garden of Eden, and he was sent ashore on a fruitless errand to discover the tombs of Adam and Eve ; but there were few laughers, and even the jokers themselves seemed to lack spirit to carry out their mischief thoroughly.

Every one, I believe, was satisfied, when, after taking a rapid glance at Ceylon, we found ourselves tossing about in the roads of Madras, with its formidable surf roaring and foaming before us. Most of my companions were going on to Calcutta, so after bidding them adieu, I was enquiring of the captain the best way of getting on shore, when a short, stout gentleman, arrayed from head to foot in white, presented himself, and asked if my name was Singleton. Upon my replying in the affirmative, he extended his hand in a dignified manner, and said :

“ You are welcome to India, Mr. S. My

name is Tobin, I am a member of the M.D.C.P.G.H.”

“I am glad to make your acquaintance, Mr. Tobin,” said I; “but I do not exactly understand the meaning of those letters.”

“Oh!” replied the member, with an air of profound compassion for my ignorance, “M.D.C.P.G.H. means Madras Diocesan Committee for Preaching the Gospel to the Hindoos; and you, Mr. Singleton, are one of *our* Missionaries.”

The little man pronounced the “our” as if I had been a package of goods consigned to the M.D.C.P.G.H.; and I was under some apprehension of being branded with these mysterious characters when I got on shore, and then exhibited to the scrutiny of all beholders as the property of the society, when Mr. Tobin, after ordering my baggage into the boat, helped me down the side, as if he had been assisting a very nervous young lady, and ordered the vessel to pull off.

When we were approaching the surf, he

exhorted me not to be frightened, and suggested my being bound to the seat by the boatmen, but this I steadily resisted; and though evidently surprised that one of "our Missionaries" should have a will of his own, he did not contest the point, and we said no more, until I found myself seated in a very comfortable carriage, and being driven at a rapid pace towards the interior of the town. My companion then informed me that he was the junior partner in a Madras house of business, and that as the secretary of the committee, who was a clergyman, resided a few miles up country, he had been deputed to meet and welcome "our Missionaries" when they arrived.

There was something rather pompous and patronizing about the deportment of Mr. Tobin, which induced me to ask, in as polite a manner as possible, whether I could not be accommodated at an hotel. I faltered out this suggestion somewhat timidly, fearing that perhaps it might give offence. But it

clearly never entered Mr. Tobin's head that his house could be anything but an Elysium to "our Missionaries ;" and I suppose he set down my diffidence to an overpowering sense of his condescension, for he subjoined :

"Now, my dear Mr. Singleton, don't be afraid of me, I assure you our Missionaries find me affable and even jocular. Mrs. T. is like a mother to them, she caters for them, looks over their clothes, and attends to all their little wants. We always furnish them with servants, horses, and in fact with whatever they require. But my dear Sir," added Mr. Tobin, "it is perhaps the depravity of human nature, but our Missionaries are not all so grateful as they should be. One of them would choose a servant for himself, another told Mrs. T. he had rather buy his own tea-cups, and a third, would you believe it, actually declared that a horse which I recommended to him, was broken-winded."

Mr. Tobin paused to take breath, after this enumeration of his grievances, and I began to

reflect upon what he had told me. It was evident he was one of those busy, bustling men, who must manage not only their own but their neighbours' affairs; persons who although good-natured, and the life of associations and committees, are apt to be very disagreeable in private society. It is easy to repel rudeness, and to guard ourselves from insolence; but there is scarcely any shield against that well-meant officiousness, which it seems unkind to treat harshly, and intolerable to endure.

"At all events," said I to myself, "I will not, if I can help it, make the fourth of those missionary examples to which my host has alluded. Unless his articles are very bad indeed, I must put up with them for the present, and change them as soon as I am able."

Just then Mr. Tobin drew my attention to a stout man, who passed us on horseback, and with whom he exchanged salutations.

"Ah!" said he, as the stranger rode on, "that is the Lily."

“The who?” said I.

“The —— Society’s Missionary, or the Lily of the Valley, as we call him here,” he replied. And then perceiving that I did not see the point of the appellation, he continued: “because you know, he toileth not, neither doth he spin.”

Mr. Tobin laughed very long and loudly at his own jocularly, and was perhaps astonished that *our* Missionary did not seem to sympathize with it so much as he ought; but I have always entertained a strong objection to witticisms, founded on a burlesque application of Scripture phrases, and therefore felt on this occasion no temptation to risibility. Fortunately Mr. Tobin’s attention was called off from me to his own house, the grounds of which we were just entering.

The carriage stopped before a verandah, formed by five pillars, covered with chunam, a species of cement, imparting almost the appearance and brilliancy of marble. Between these supporters were drawn thick blinds, to

keep out the glare of the sun, which they did so effectually, that on passing into the room at the back, the internal objects were scarcely discernible. As soon as my eyes had recovered from the effects of the contrast, I distinguished the dim outline of a sofa, with something white lying upon it, to which Mr. Tobin led me, and said :

“ Mrs. T., my dear, this is Mr. Singleton, from London, one of *our* Missionaries.”

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